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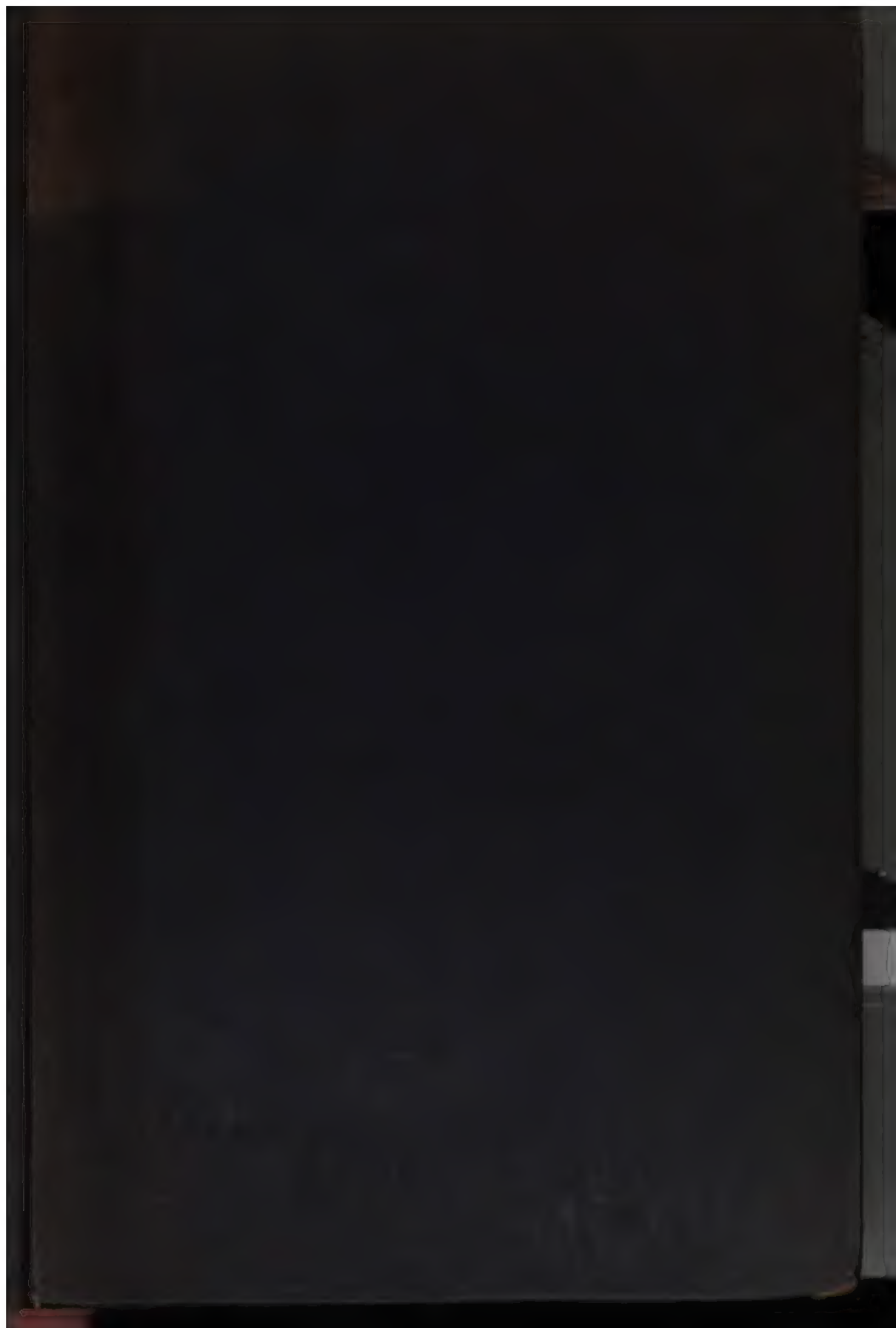
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**PERSONAL IDEALISM**

**PHILOSOPHICAL ESSAYS**

**BY**

**EIGHT MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD**

**EDITED BY**

**HENRY STURT**

**LONDON : MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED.**

**1902**

## **IDOLA THEATRI**



# IDOLA THEATRI

A CRITICISM  
OF OXFORD THOUGHT AND THINKERS  
FROM THE STANDPOINT OF  
PERSONAL IDEALISM

BY

HENRY STURT

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## PREFACE

I HAVE received much help from friends in preparing this book: the President of Corpus and Mr. W. H. Fairbrother of Lincoln College have read and criticised the chapter on T. H. Green; Mr. R. R. Marett of Exeter College has read four chapters in manuscript and the whole book in proof, and has made numberless valuable suggestions. My general obligations to Prof. Stout and Mr. Canning Schiller are sufficiently apparent. In the chapter on German Idealism I am indebted to several living writers, in particular to Dr. Hutchison Stirling, the Master of Balliol, Prof. John Watson, Dr. McTaggart, and Prof. J. B. Baillie; though it will be noticed that my view of Hegel is widely different from theirs. And it is proper to take this opportunity of acknowledging with gratitude my debt of instruction to the Oxford thinkers whom the book criticises. I should like to be permitted to assure Mr. Bradley and Prof. Bosanquet that dissent from their opinions has never obscured my perception of the value of what they have done for British philosophy.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

- A.R.* = *Appearance and Reality*. By F. H. Bradley. 1893.  
*E.S.* = *Ethical Studies*. By F. H. Bradley. 1876.  
*L.H.* = *The Logic of Hegel*. Translated from the *Encyclopedia* by  
W. Wallace. Second edition, 1892.  
*P.G.* = G. W. F. Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. Zweite  
Auflage, 1841.  
*P.L.* = *The Principles of Logic*. By F. H. Bradley. 1883.  
*P.M.* = Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*. Translated by W. Wallace.  
1894.  
*P.R.* = Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*. Translated by S. W. Dyde.  
1896.

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2. 2. 2.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTORY

AT the cost of an appearance of egoism I had better tell plainly how I came to write this book: the history of its origin will make the best introduction to its meaning.

Beginning philosophy as an undergraduate twenty-two years ago, I adopted at once the idealism currently taught in the University: it seemed to be what was wanted to vindicate personality and the spiritual world against the lower-categories philosophy of the materialists and sensationists. Nevertheless, before long I came to feel, in common, I believe, with not a few of my contemporaries, that the teaching we got was hardly strong enough in the explanation of definite problems. Some such thought, I remember, haunted me in hearing, for example, the logic lectures of the late Lewis Nettleship. He told us elaborately and often what knowledge was *not*, but, having thus awakened expectation, did little to satisfy it: we seemed to be always on the verge of a great secret which our teacher would never disclose. T. H. Green, whose *Prolegomena to Ethics* I read somewhat later, was much

more definite than Nettleship: but even his great doctrine of the Spiritual Principle, though it gratified religious aspiration, did not seem to be clearly reasoned out; nor could any one be sure how far it would go in explaining the religious consciousness. Meanwhile, no open-minded student, I am certain, was quite at ease about the attitude of the Oxford idealists to modern science. A book such as Herbert Spencer's *Data of Ethics*, though palpably deficient in philosophic culture, appeared to contain much that was based on the impregnable rock of experience. And yet to all the new ideas that Spencer represented Green's attitude was merely negative. He pointed to facts which the biological moralists left out, but never tried to assimilate their many valuable contributions to moral theory. This want of receptivity, together with its own limited explanatory power, cast upon the Oxford philosophy of 1885 a suspicion of reactionism and unreality which even an eager disciple could scarcely ignore.

In course of time the movement which began with Green produced its crop of literature—Mr. Bradley's *Ethical Studies* and *Principles of Logic* in 1876 and 1883 respectively, Mr. Bosanquet's *Logic* in 1888, Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* in 1893, and finally Prof. Wallace's *Lectures and Essays* in 1898—I omit the numerous works of commentary and historical exposition. To the later books of this series as they successively appeared one turned with hope to find the defects of the former teaching made good: one looked

for a new and comprehensive synthesis which would show adequate appreciation of personal life, together with assimilation of scientific ideas so far as they bore on philosophy. But, the more the outcome of the idealist movement developed, the less prospect there appeared that these hopes would be fulfilled. The three writers I have mentioned represent differently toned adaptations of Hegel, Mr. Bradley a quasi-mystical or Spinozistic Hegelianism, Profs. Bosanquet and Wallace a Hegelianism of the left and of the right respectively. The two former speak respectfully of evolutionary science, without attempting to assimilate its methods and results. None of them gives adequate recognition to the deepest facts of personal life; Mr. Bradley, indeed, in his latest work takes a decisively anti-personal line. Wallace's book is a learned and brilliant failure in construction. Messrs. Bradley and Bosanquet offer syntheses of a certain kind; Wallace almost makes us despair of one.

The net result for Oxford of this remarkable literature, which together with much exegetical work of a similar tendency shows the highest speculative quality, was that philosophy went down seriously in academic consideration from the position which it held at Green's death. The man of average calibre—and it is he who exemplifies most unmistakably the vitality of current ideas—took more and more to commentating: an Alexandrian period threatened to set in. To avert such a calamity, the joint volume which afterwards appeared as *Personal Idealism*

was projected six years ago: its aim was to revive a flagging interest by developing and defending the principle of personality from many individual points of view. Of the essays there included, one by Mr. Canning Schiller startled the world by its advocacy of a principle which might have been traced already in the work of Prof. William James and of several continental writers, and has now become famous under the names of Pragmatism and Humanism. This essay, "Axioms as Postulates," appears to me to have opened a new chapter in British thought.

To different minds the pragmatist or humanist movement doubtless makes a different appeal: to mine its value lies in its recognition of personal striving, and its suggestion of a philosophy of the future which will treat personal striving as the central fact of our experience. I emphasise *personal*, to make a distinction from *impersonal* cosmic striving, such as that of Schopenhauer, which leads to a philosophic outcome utterly different. Such a philosophy of striving, which in a classification of philosophies is a form of Voluntarism, might be made to combine what is true in the Oxford idealism of the last thirty years with a recognition of the results of modern biology and anthropology. On the one hand it would take over and strengthen the main position of T. H. Green's argument against the naturalism of his day, by which he showed that our higher activities in knowledge and morality exhibit a principle incapable of being resolved into what, in his language, is "merely natural." On the

other hand, it would adopt the doctrine of evolution with its formulæ of adaptation to environment, struggle for existence, and survival of the fittest; and it would apply this doctrine to our highest activities, always with the understanding that here we are on a plane above biology, and that the striving which is the mainspring of the self's development is increasingly conscious and purposeful as the development proceeds.

Such a form of voluntarism can hardly fail to commend itself to those who hold firmly both to idealism and to evolution. The evolutionist must either explain the self as a product of its material surroundings, or must hold that it makes its own characteristic contribution to the world's process. The first alternative is forbidden by idealism: and one who accepts the second has implicitly accepted voluntarism; he must regard the self as a force able to play its own part in striving with the world. For such a world-view Hegelianism supplies no substitute. The late Prof. Ritchie's attempt to exhibit Hegel as the 'truth of Darwin' only shows more plainly the impossibility of identifying the non-dynamic, self-contained thought-development of dialectic with the dynamic interaction of self and the world which is commonly assumed by scientific men.

Concurrently with the conviction that the future of philosophy lies with voluntarism there came to me a better understanding of my early want of whole-hearted accordance with T. H. Green and of my dissatisfaction with his successors. With in-



creasing definiteness I seemed to detect the operation of certain fallacies which prevented them from appreciating just those facts of personality and evolution on which my suggested synthesis is based. And thus I was led in the interest of clear thinking to disentangle these fallacies; to look into their historical filiations, to ascertain what consequences they logically involve, and what consequences they do actually involve in the writings of some leading Oxford thinkers.

This investigation concluded, the question arose whether the result was worth giving to the world. Could any common good be looked for from the publication? Rightly or wrongly, I thought it could, mainly because of the opposition which the pragmatist or humanist movement has encountered from a large and powerful body within the University and outside it. The indignation with which Mr. Bradley and the Hegelians have greeted the advent of Pragmatism shows that the Idols of the Theatre criticised in the following pages possess an importance not merely historical, and that they have to be driven from the field before voluntarism can get a fair hearing.

The task of elucidating these fallacies seems all the more worth attempting, since many who are interested in philosophy have extremely vague notions of the origin and real tendencies of the school now dominant among us. This is due to the fact that devotion to classical antiquity in Oxford has somewhat obscured the importance of the history of

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modern thought. Few of our junior students, and not all of their teachers, understand clearly the relation of contemporary work to the great German idealists, and, so far, are hardly in a position to estimate its value. I believe that these Idols of the Theatre are thoroughly uncongenial to our national habit of mind ; and that when they are seen in their true light they will cease to gather the allegiance of the rising generation.

## CHAPTER II

### THE PASSIVE FALLACY

§ 1. THE Proton Pseudos, the besetting temptation of philosophy, not only in the present but in every other age, is the inclination to overlook the kinetic and dynamic character of human experience. That men are changing, dynamic beings interacting with the world of changing forces in which they live, has always been recognised by common sense: but the philosophic thinker is ever tempted to forget it. His tendency all through has been to overlook the element of activity in the human self; and to regard the world at large as mutable only through defect and infirmity, or even as static in reality beneath its appearance of change. This I call the Passive Fallacy.

Where the passive fallacy has sway it must vitiate in some measure every part of the system of thought. Omit the dynamic element, and how can we form just conceptions of reality, substance, relation, and cause; or of matter and material phenomena in general; or of the human self; or of God? Still more fatal is this omission in the detailed treatment of the mental and moral sciences.

No static view of morality and art can represent them truly : and even logic which, for reasons that will appear later, has lent itself most easily to the passive fallacy, must need a deep reform if intellectual operations are themselves activities and demand to be studied in their general connection with active life.

§ 2. Over and above the concurrent causes to be mentioned presently, the great predisposing cause of the passive fallacy is the separation of the student from active life. The influences making for separation are so many and various that they must be indicated rather briefly.

In a normal life and in normal conduct study and action go intimately together : study is undertaken mainly in preparation for immediate action. The simpler the example we select, the more plainly will it illustrate this point, as when we examine the bank of a brook in preparation for jumping across it. But even in primitive societies a certain severance of study from action arises in consequence of the natural division of labour, as when there grows up a select body of counsellors distinct from the mass of fighting men. Later, with the rise of a system of education, a scholar-class comes into being whose business is preponderantly study. It is among this specialised class mainly that we find the tendency to ignore activity : the passive fallacy might be described as a disease of education.

Even in the ancient world we can see this tendency clearly enough. It begins in exaggeration

of that independence of utility which is so necessary and salutary to the student. Where society is fully organised the sedentary student is just as practically useful as the hodman ; but it is essential to his full utility that he should not always be considering what is useful. He should let himself be carried along by scientific curiosity, and only keep half an eye on the question whether practice will benefit. And yet mischief arises if he let himself be carried along too fast and too far, and if that half-an-eye be withdrawn from utility. The hypertrophy of scientific curiosity is not a common fault ; but the student, at least, must be on guard against it.

A fault in the same direction, very evident in Plato and in all minds of the finest temper, is exaggeration of the unworldly spirit's detachment from the world : this we might call the Preacher's Fallacy in philosophy. It is part of the business of moral exhortation to tell men not to be too keen on worldly pursuits. The philosopher is generally a preacher too, or, at least, can hardly keep himself from preaching : disgusted with the abounding futility and vulgarity of the life of politics and commerce, he is tempted to proclaim as a counsel of perfection complete withdrawal into the quiet of the Academic grove : *il faut cultiver notre jardin*. Closely allied to this is the passivism which belongs to the alliance of philosophy with religious devotion. The retirement to contemplate the eternal ideas which closes the life of Plato's Guardians has much in common with the eremitism of India and of Christianity.

§ 3. These influences are strengthened in modern times by the increasing specialisation and isolation of educational men. In the ancient world education, and study generally, was a simple affair compared to what it has since become: we can see this by comparing the Hellenic education, so direct and practical in all its features, with any ideal that could be suggested now. Modern civilisation has grown so complex in its needs that it is inexpedient to check scientific curiosity at any point: the mere efflux of time has created an enormous volume of record which has to be learnt to make existing society intelligible: the extinct languages of ancient civilisation have to be painfully acquired, and an adequate culture also implies the learning of two or three modern ones. All this growing burden of learning tends to cut the educator off from participation in general society; meanwhile the temptation to the preacher's fallacy has hardly diminished, and the devotional severance of contemplation from action has been strengthened by the Christian antithesis between the secular and spiritual lives.

In endowed academic societies, such as our ancient universities, where the encouragement that is given to branches of study has ceased to bear any definite relation to their utility, there are well-known influences which aggravate the effects of the segregation of the educating class. The temptation to forget that studying is a preparation for living, the professional prejudice that makes the educator ignore the subordinateness of his own function, the

conservatism that persists in educational methods which have ceased to be fruitful, the preoccupation with mere technique, the narrowness of minutely specialised scholarship, the morbid interest in abstruse and difficult bits of antiquarianism, the slavish admiration of antiquity and incapacity for discovering contemporary genius, the over-estimation of docility and of erudition, the limitation of 'knowledge' to the knowledge of other men's performances, the mental parasitism that lives upon commentating, the impossible fastidiousness that regards unproductivity as a mark of true culture, the critical ingenuity that ends by criticising its own head off—all this anti-practical sort of spirit is greatly fostered by the close out-of-the-worldliness of an ancient seat of learning. The passive fallacy reaches its fullest growth in a climate of academicism.

§ 4. It is the Passive Fallacy then, which I take to be the great enveloping condition predisposing speculative men to an over-static interpretation of experience: and in each of the main departments of thought it so happens that the fallacy is reinforced by reaction against the crudely natural way of looking at things. Take first cosmology. Primitive man sees around him a world of things in continual change; of the rules by which the changes come to pass he understands but little. Science, however, depends on the discovery of uniformities in the flux of phenomena; in the eye of science a law is vastly more important than its concrete examples. From the earliest times thinkers have been wont to concen-

trate attention upon the uniformities, to emphasise them as the true realities, and to speak slightly of the mutable concrete facts as unreal. So must we explain the tendency to regard nature as a fixed system of laws, and as being in its essence statical, however it may appear to change. And this tendency has survived to our day, though reflection ought to bring us back to see that it is the concrete facts which count, and that laws are constructed to help us in understanding the concrete past and present, and in predicting and managing the future.

§ 5. The principle that laws are more real than their embodiment extends beyond the sphere of the interpretation of nature; it applies no less to religion. In the dynamic view God is to be regarded as an energy continuously manifested; in the static view the fixed rules of divine action alone are real. Thus it has become usual to apply to God every epithet expressing permanence: in Him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. Here we can see reaction against polytheistic conceptions of deity. The savage discerns no fixity in his gods beyond a prevalence of very human passions, and credits them with constant intermeddling in mundane affairs. When men's religious conceptions grow refined they tend to pass to the other extreme; a conception of deity such as that of Aristotle was doubtless influenced by reaction from the surrounding polytheism. So potent has the static prejudice grown that to attribute change to God will seem almost pagan.



§ 6. In the mental sciences, or, to speak more specifically, in logic and ethics, the passive fallacy is helped by the clear severance which early analysis makes between human faculties. In the pre-scientific view, a view to which, as purified by reflection, thought is destined to return, each man is one being, and thinks and acts as one. The first step of science is to make distinctions and demarcations. Nothing can exceed the separateness of Plato's treatment of the human faculties: and vast as the advance in psychology has been since Plato's day, we have been more ready to refine and multiply his distinctions than to rise to a standpoint transcending them. In logic, particularly, the intellect has been treated as separable from conation, and the sedentary prejudice of academic minds has caused them all through the history of logical study to illustrate intellectual operations from the receptive rather than the creative intelligence. It will be the task of logic in the future to correct this mistake of early system-making, to re-establish the unity of human life, and to prove that logical functions and concepts are moulded and penetrated every way by conative experience.

## CHAPTER III

### THE IDOLS OF THE THEATRE

§ 1. THE Passive Fallacy, though a general predisposing cause of failure, is not alone accountable for what is unsatisfactory in contemporary thought : the full explanation lies with certain more special tendencies which I call Intellectualism, Absolutism, and Subjectivism. These tendencies, though differing in their specific character and not springing directly from the Passive Fallacy, harmonise with it so far that in their ultimate results they are inconsistent with the adequate recognition of personality, more especially on its volitional side. These are the *Idola Theatri*, the fallacious *dogmata philosophiarum*, which my work is primarily intended to controvert. In the present chapter I will offer brief definitions and illustrations of them before entering upon detailed criticism.

§ 2. Of the three *idola* the most important and oldest in European thought is Intellectualism. It comes from that over-emphasis upon intellect which is natural to intellectual men, more especially to those who are spectators rather than participants in the active life of their society. The intel-

lectualist can only be defined in the most general terms as one who attempts to explain everything in terms of thought or reason, to the neglect of other sides of our experience, more particularly of sensation and volition.

Intellectualism has not been elaborated as a thorough-going system till modern times, but we can draw from ancient philosophy examples of its influence, which are the more instructive because unsophisticated. Such a one is the Socratic dictum that virtue is knowledge, worked out so thoroughly by Plato. Here we have a mistake natural and excusable at a time when science was young, and when nobody could say to what results it might not lead. Were ignorance but once dispersed, men thought with naive optimism, virtue would come easy to all. The long line of Hellenic thinkers, who from Plato downwards made this identification of virtue with knowledge, may severally have attached to it various shades of meaning; but they were certainly attributing to intellect functions which are now generally admitted to be volitional.

Another Platonic philosopheme, the Theory of Ideas, illustrates in its bearing on logic and metaphysic the anti-sensational side of intellectualism: its epistemological outcome is to deny to sense-perception its function of furnishing the material of knowledge; and, as regards metaphysic, it reduces to nonentity matter so far as it is sensuously revealed. What the true metaphysical interpretation of matter may be is still

under debate ; but the Platonic extrusion of sensation from knowledge has no support from modern epistemology.

§ 3. It was not till the last century that intellectualism reached its systematic completion in Panlogism, a *Weltanschauung* which makes a thorough-going attempt to explain all elements of the self and the objective world as forms of thought. In the only fully worked-out system of this kind, the Hegelian, the panlogism is monistic, that is, all things in heaven and earth are the parts of One Thought or Subject, within which are included even the human selves whose separate existence ordinary pluralism affirms.

In a chapter devoted mainly to Hegel I will review panlogism in its full and definitive expression : the chapter immediately following the present one will criticise the philosophic results of such intellectualist and panlogist principles as have been adopted by Oxford thinkers. The outcome of my criticism will be that intellectualism, though far from successful in other directions, fails most decisively in so far as it ignores the volitional element of personal experience. In ethics, one may venture to say, its failure is widely recognised : it is tolerably plain that any one who reduces all striving to thinking cannot explain so conative an experience as morality. In logic, the discipline on which the intellectualist school has spent most of its force, the failure is less apparent, but, I believe, not less real. If thinking is in normal cases not

separated from active doing, it cannot be adequately explained by an non-conative philosophy.

§ 4. The second idolon, Absolutism, is even more opposed than the first to the principle of personality: for, whereas intellectualism denies the substantive existence of certain important elements of the self, absolutism denies the validity of personal experience altogether. It may be defined as consisting in the assertion of an absolutely perfect and changeless Being which includes within itself all individualities that ever existed or will exist, which is more real and more certainly known than the persons and things of our phenomenal world, and is the complete reconciliation and solution of all the theoretical and practical difficulties that beset human experience.

From the personal idealist's standpoint the fatal fault in absolutism is just its assertion of the priority of the Absolute to the person. We attack this assertion best by raising the question how the absolutist gets his knowledge of the Absolute. Three ways are conceivable, by direct mystic illumination, by identity of the philosopher's reason with the world-reason, by ordinary reasoning. To the first way no thinker with whom we have to deal makes any pretension. The second is claimed by Hegel (cf. *infra*, chap. vii. § 27), but is totally at variance with present-day ideas and is barred for a thinker such as Mr. Bradley by his doctrine of the disparateness of the absolute intelligence from the

human. There remains the third, which is used by Mr. Bradley and our contemporaries generally. But, when a man uses ordinary reasoning to establish the Absolute, he is evidently assuming the reality and validity of the rational human mind and of the forms whereby it operates: and, when he starts, as Mr. Bradley, for example, starts, from facts of ordinary experience, he is evidently assuming that these facts are known at least as certainly as the Absolute to which he advances from them. A personal reasoner whose conclusions discredit personality is cutting the ground from under his own feet.

§ 5. The explanation of absolutism is reached through mysticism; it is the analogue in philosophy of mysticism in the sphere of devotion. Mysticism is an ever-recurring concomitant of strong devotional feeling, though not an invariable one: for we find cases where devotion deepens into prostration and worship into a sense of worthlessness before God, without leading on to mysticism; there is nothing of the sort in Bunyan, to take a familiar example. And yet the history of Protestant theology shows how readily this intense devotion takes on a mystical form. Mysticism appears when the worshipper becomes eager, not merely for intercourse with God as in ordinary prayer, but for absorption or annihilation in God; the mystic is eager to surrender his personal will and judgment to the divine. And this primary characteristic of mysticism implies two others—belief that the

worshipper may have direct communion with God by channels other than those of ordinary mundane intercourse, and conviction that the mystical knowledge of God is more valuable and more certain than any mundane knowledge.

It is, I believe, only through the mysticism of religion that we can understand the forms of it that have little or no express connection with religion. Mystics of this latter kind have a "passion for the whole," what Amiel calls *l'éblouissement de l'infini*, which need not spring consciously from religion, but seems inexplicable without reference thereto. What should cause a man's thoughts to go out towards the Universe so strongly as to make him slight the persons and affairs of daily finite existence, except a sentiment of reverence and admiration for the Universe akin to the sentiment of religion? Amiel's *Journal* (pathetic memorial of a wasted life) is the classical document of the less religious form of mysticism, though in his case there was religion enough to make his mind easily intelligible—"j'ai trop longtemps erré, cherché; je me trompais; tout est bien, mon Dieu m'enveloppe." And a thinker of Amiel's type helps us to understand the still less religious mysticism of Mr. F. H. Bradley.

The absolutist, so far as his world-theory means something real to him and is not merely the facile adoption of a current fashion of thought, must have a tinge of mysticism in his nature; but he need not be a mystic in practice. A native attraction to the Whole makes it congenial for him to postulate an



all-inclusive Infinite Being, but he does not desire union with it; he does not countenance any of the devotional practices, Eastern or Western, by which men have sought for union. Nor, again, is he wont to claim a special channel of knowledge of the Absolute. Altogether, the Absolute stands for him rather as a principle of philosophic explanation. He may assert that all finite persons and things *are* melted down in the Absolute; but what he rather means is that all the theoretic difficulties incident to finite existence disappear when the Absolute is postulated. For convenience of terminology I shall always use the 'Absolute' in this sense as the theoretic analogue of the 'God' or 'Brahma' of practical mysticism.

§ 6. In its best and freshest form mysticism is a positive centripetal force, inspiring a conviction of the essential goodness of the universe. An optimistic mystic or absolutist such as Plotinus is impatient of personality just because its conditions belong to that finitude which to his mind produces all deficiency and evil by hindering us from blending our lives with the life of the Whole. Spinoza, too, the god-intoxicated philosopher, represents an absolutism of the optimistic type, in temperament, if not in logical theory. But the absolutism which makes more figure in contemporary thought, perhaps just because it is more subtle and tortuous, is pessimistic or, at least, tinged with pessimism. The moving thought in it is not so much the 'love of God,' intellectual



or devout, as the recoil from man. It is mainly repulsion from actual life because of its failure, evil, perplexity, transitoriness, and unsatisfied longing that drives this kind of absolutist towards the One-and-All. Weariness of the bustle of affairs; contempt for conventional ambitions; revolt against the evil of the world, its cruelty to oneself in particular; the wounded pride of intellect which, because it cannot understand everything, would have it that no one can understand anything; tedium of the shifting scenes of history which grow meaningless when interest flags; and above all, in these latter days, despair of satisfying emotional and sensuous claims in the cabined and confined existence which is what most civilised workers are asked to make the best of—any of these rebuffs will disgust a sensitive man with life, and drive a thinker for solace to an imagined union with the Perfect that is free from all limitation and evil.

§ 7. If followed through consistently the absolutist line of thought results in melting down all finite predicates and individualities into a featureless unity. Various literary expressions of it are familiar to every one :

"They reckon ill who leave me out ;  
When me they fly, I am the wings ;  
I am the doubter and the doubt,  
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings."

or this phrase from Amiel :

"Once more I come upon the fathomless abyss, the silent and melancholy cavern, where dwell *Die Mutter*, where sleeps that which neither lives nor dies, which has

neither movement nor change, nor extension, nor form, and which lasts when all else has passed away."

Effective as this may be in small quantities for poetry and fine writing, no one can make much of it philosophically. It may be parodied, and at the same time accurately described, by enumerating heterogeneous things till one is tired ("ships and shoes and sealing-wax and cabbages and kings"), and saying that the Absolute both is and is not all these and everything else. Its sole advantage for thought is that it gratifies the unifying or monistic instinct which makes us desire to see the world as the manifestation of a single principle. Thus few people care seriously about pure 'pantēctic' absolutism. All modern forms of absolutism that have been worked out systematically are modified by concessions to finite existence. On the one hand, they view the Absolute under the form of some element of human experience, such as thought, or will, or feeling; on the other hand, they concede a certain half-reality to individual persons and things. The latter kind of concession is embodied in the Doctrine of Appearances, which asserts that the Universe, *as it really is*, is one, infinite, changeless, all-inclusive, and perfectly harmonious; but that, *as it appears*, it is multiplex, finite, mutable, partial, and discordant: *as it appears*, the One Reality is split up into independent, finite, and mutable consciousnesses, experiences, and phenomenal facts which have, as it were, a provisional and unreal existence.

§ 8. Mysticism and absolutism are evidently akin in some degree to Pantheism, but the exact relation is not very easy to define. In strict logic a mystic or absolutist must also be a pantheist; for the assertion that 'God is all' implies its converse, 'All is God.' I think, however, that there are many people who come to pantheistic views by a different road, and would hardly be willing to accede to systematic absolutism. These are commonly people of religious and enthusiastic character who are filled with conviction of the all-pervasiveness of God, and are so appreciative of the goodness of things that they cannot bear to treat anything as alien to God. If pantheism means no more than this, it is evidently not irreconcilable with orthodox theism: it would come into direct conflict only with the deistic religion which regards the Deity as distinctly separate from the universe. This vague form of pantheism is undoubtedly the commonest, and history shows its influence upon the best intellects of literature and speculation. Without this generous warmth pantheism seems to differ from absolutism merely in lack of cogency. The faith that 'God is all' takes its power, as we have seen, from the centripetal attraction of mysticism, but what is there to draw one to affirm that 'All is God'? To one who *starts* with 'All is God' what is the gain, except a satisfaction to the monistic instinct, in affirming every stick and stone to be a piece of the Deity?

§ 9. Our third idolon, Subjectivism, is the tendency to over-emphasise the subjective side of experience. In the ancient world thinkers tended to disregard the subjective: in the modern the tendency has been reversed; thinkers have tended to forget that the objective side is no less necessary than the subjective to human experience. The culmination of the tendency is Solipsism, where the object is merged entirely in the subject, and language is used which would preclude the reality even of other selves.

Subjectivism is more artificial than the two idols of which I have just spoken: it is more an affair of the schools, and is rooted less deeply in human nature. Nevertheless, there is something in human nature that answers to it, a natural subjectivism without which the subjectivism of systematic speculation would probably never have been thought of. It springs from the defective hold upon reality noticeable in men who do not participate much in the active business of life. Naturally it is most frequent in those who have not started their career, more especially in the finer spirits who love to dream of something better than what the common bustling world seems likely to afford them. Like the Prince in Tennyson's poem, times come upon such a one when he seems "to move among a world of ghosts, and feel himself the shadow of a dream." Among us in Europe this feeling is commonly dispelled by contact with the world; but, in the more passive East, what is here a phase of

youth seems there to last on into serious philosophy. It is one of the commonplaces of Eastern thought to put the question for debate, 'Suppose life is all a dream.'

§ 10. Without some natural backing of this kind, subjectivism would hardly maintain itself. But as a definite philosophic theory it arises from a defect of analysis. The reconstructive sceptic, of whom Descartes is the type, anxious to seek truth unencumbered by the questionable accumulations of the past, turns his thought inwards and asks: What is there that I can be certain of? and answers: Nothing but that I exist and am a conscious being. The philosophic starting-point of subjectivism, then, is the proposition that the individual mind has direct knowledge of nothing beyond its conscious states. But, in limiting knowledge thus, an oversight is made leading to the gravest consequences: even in the lowest grade of consciousness that we can study definitely by introspection, we take for granted that certain of our conscious states reveal the presence of objects; in other words, we have from the first an intuition of objectivity. Nor is this primitive intuition an illusion which further experience dispels; all progress depends upon it. This is so even with progress in self-knowledge, which appears least connected with the objective world: for what we are is mainly what we can do; and apart from the world in which we are placed and on which we operate, we can do nothing. Moreover, one ought

not to forget the confirmation which our intuitive postulation of objects receives from the realisation of anticipation. We anticipate that we shall find to-morrow the world of objects which we know to-day ; and this anticipation comes true. As soon as we accept the starting-point that offers itself naturally, we are led right away from subjectivism.

§ 11. Subjectivism is so difficult a world-view and so unattractive to the Western temperament that it is not adopted except for special theoretic reasons, and is very seldom held consistently. Descartes' motive plainly was to clear away mediævalism and get room for science ; Berkeley's to refute the materialists ; Fichte's to make Kantianism systematic ; John Mill's to strike a blow at intuitionism and the obscurantists by deriving everything from sensation. And none of them makes much pretence of maintaining the subjectivist position beyond what is required by the purpose which he has in view. But if subjectivism were held consistently it would be quite incompatible with activity. In normal cases sustained activity is dependent upon stimulus ; there must be something interesting in the environment to provoke us to continued exertion. Secondly, when we act, we must have something to act upon. Failing an environment to be changed by our efforts we beat the void in vain. A thinker must forget activity before he can regard solipsism as a possible view of the world.

§ 12. Such I take to be the contemporary Idols

of the Theatre, to the influence of which we must attribute the prevalent failure to do justice to the most important fact in our experience, personality, and to the most important element in personality, volition. The criticism in the three chapters following deals mainly with these two points: the rest of what I shall have to say will touch upon the non-recognition of sensation, of objectivity in general, and of material existence. And matter and the objective world in general, though not belonging directly to personality, are at least all-important conditions of personal life as we know it.



## CHAPTER IV

### INTELLECTUALISM

§ 1. It is not till Hegel that intellectualism comes to the uncompromising assertion that Reality is thought and nothing but thought: previous to him it is always qualified by partial recognition of elements not identical with thought. In Plato, for example, sensation and sensuous phenomena are allowed to possess a half-reality: in Kant, though neither sensation nor volition gets its due, the existence of both is recognised to a considerable degree. And the reason is that, so long as the philosopher starts in his synthesis from individual experience, he cannot fail to take account of factors which are other than intellectual. Pleasure and pain, volitional strength and weakness, emotion, the givenness of perceptive experience, its dynamic character, its quantity, and the qualitative differences of its species are all hard to reduce to forms of thinking. This or the other of them may have been intellectualised, but no one who pays even moderate regard to the individual can intellectualise them all.

§ 2. But Hegel can regard all experience as



thought because he starts, not with the individual, but with the Absolute. From this standpoint the considerations which forbid us to treat all experience as intellectual can either be ignored or be treated as dependent upon the accidental limitations of finite existence.

"Let us imagine a harmonious system of ideal contents united by relations, and reflecting itself in self-conscious harmony. This is to be reality, all reality; and there is nothing outside it" (*A.R.* p. 170).

This quotation from Mr. Bradley sums up Hegel's position: in other words, the Universe is a Thought, of which everything we know is a determination. Following good authority I have called this extreme intellectualism, the reduction of everything to intellect, or reason, or thought, by the term Panlogism.<sup>1</sup> Without being accepted in its entirety by anybody this *Weltanschauung* has had great influence upon contemporary thought at Oxford. It will be most instructive if I criticise intellectualism so far as possible in its panlogistic form, touching especially on points which occur in Oxford thinkers. Beginning with Cosmology, I will attempt to show that it gives a distorted account of all the main facts of experience.

§ 3. The panlogist cannot give any reasonable account of Things: his position compels him to deny more or less explicitly various generally accepted characteristics of thinghood. One of

<sup>1</sup> "Daher kann die Lehre Hegels mit vollem Recht als Panlogismus bezeichnet werden" (Ueberweg. *Grundriss*, 9th ed. iv. p. 46).

these characteristics is Alienness from spirit. Every form of idealism claims that by deeper insight this alienness may be transcended, and that matter is ultimately to be regarded as a form of spirit; but every one, except the panlogist, will admit that, at any view-point short of ultimate, things are not spiritual: they persist stubbornly in their own mode of existence. This gulf between the spiritual existence of persons and the non-spiritual existence of things must be ignored by the panlogist. So far as he is faithful to his theory he must describe things in terms of thought: things are thoughts solidified or petrified or, to change the metaphor, self-disguised in otherness.

§ 4. The panlogist account of the Reality of things follows from what has just been said. The doctrine that things are thought leads on to the consequence that things are real just because they are thought and in proportion as they are thinkable. Hence the paradox of Degrees of Reality. The plain man holds that, if a thing has objective reality, it has it once for all, whether its intellectual content be rich or meagre, clear or obscure: Shakespeare's pen was not less real than the dramas which he wrote with it. And in our ordinary dealing with things we proceed on the principle that, though reality implies a minimum of intelligibility, it is not proportionate to intelligibility. A man judges his pen to be real because he sees it and feels it in his hand: it does not become more real to him if he happens to learn that its point is iridium and under-

stands the chemical properties of that rare metal. On the other hand, the apprehension of a thing's reality may be strengthened without increase in its intelligibility. If the man were to swallow his pen, for example, its reality would come home to him with added force, though he could not say it had more intelligibility. In short, we must hold that there is such a thing as crude fact, due to the affection of our sensibility and the resisting of our will. For crude fact, however, there can be no place in the panlogist scheme.

§ 5. Again, the intellectualist does not do justice to the Independence of things. It is generally admitted that nothing can be absolutely independent, and that 'unrelated existence' amounts to a self-contradiction: but this truth needs supplementing with the corresponding truth that there is no such thing as absolute dependence. Everything has its own quality, without which there would be nothing for relations to attach themselves to. It is this truth which the intellectualist is in the habit of ignoring: he speaks as if a thing were nothing apart from its place in a logical system; as if the relations in which it stands gave it all its being. Similarly, he greatly over-estimates the logical plasticity of things, *i.e.* the degree to which they can be transformed by reading meaning into them. His position is often illustrated by the way in which a distant object, say a landscape, can be transformed and unfolded by prolonged scrutiny. The fact is undoubted, but too much is built upon it. The

distant prospect has always its own quality of line, colour, and shading which sets limits to the meaning that can be read into it: the interpretative process needs data which it does not create.

§ 6. The independence and logical implasticity of things leads us to notice the most important of all the qualities ignored by intellectualism, their Dynamic Character, *i.e.* their power of exercising force and opposing resistance. The neglect of this, and the analogous neglect of human energy and will, is a grievous hiatus in many philosophies, intellectualist and otherwise. In Mill's 'permanent possibilities of sensation' no less than in Hegel's account of material things as thought petrified, and in Green's account of nature as a tissue of relations constituted by a universal consciousness, there is no hint of the fact that man is an embodied force who is surrounded by other forces acting upon him and upon each other and limiting his activity in every direction, but capable of being made subservient to his purposes.

Thinghood is an indispensable category of experience, and the panlogist having deleted it from its proper place is moved to restore it in another where it has no business. One of the best-known Hegelian shibboleths (Dr. Stirling calls it the "Secret of Hegel") is the 'concrete universal.' If taken seriously the phrase must mean that the conception of a stone has as much thinghood as the stone itself is popularly credited with. Ordinary men suppose that the objective material world consists

of stones and things like stones: the Hegelian asserts, much in the spirit of mediæval realism, that conceptions alone have real substantiality.

§ 7. The panlogist denial of the dynamic element of the world involves the denial of Change; for change is unmeaning except as a manifestation of power. And this leads on to a denial which is still more famous, the denial of the reality of Time: for time has meaning only in reference to change; it is a schematic form whereby men express the fact or possibility of continuous change. The thoroughly consistent panlogist must stand simply on the position that reality is changeless and timeless: while a thinker such as Prof. Bosanquet would qualify that position by admitting the invincible obstinacy of our impression that things change, so that men would require, as it were, an additional sense if they are to see behind time; but he also would insist on its ultimate unreality.

It is well known how hard a question this of time is for panlogistic thinkers, more especially for those who adopt the conception of development. In Hegel's *Logic* the transition from category to category is a sort of timeless process, and yet it has some reference to time; for he elsewhere uses the dialectic to explain history. The difficulty of reconciling the reality of development with the unreality of time is so acute that Dr. McTaggart admits that here is a contradiction at present insoluble, and can only urge that one more synthesis may remain as yet undiscovered which will resolve the last and most per-

sistent of the contradictions inherent in experience as viewed by the Hegelian (*Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic*, ch. v.).

§ 8. Denying, as he does, the reality of time the panlogist must give a very strange account of History, using that term for a series of events or happenings. Nothing ever happens to the panlogist: he believes the whole series of events to exist really as a Totum Simul, which somehow insists upon coming into view piecemeal: he reduces happening to logical colligation. The event 'Smith left home yesterday' is put by him upon the same plane as the step of reasoning 'Then the angle PQR is greater than the angle PRQ.' In neither case is there really any event; only a logical step necessitated by what precedes and necessitating what succeeds.

"History," says Prof. Bosanquet, "*in the sense of the mere record of remembered fact*, would seem to have for its ideal to disappear into systems of hypothetical judgment, in which complete ground should do duty for cause and effect, and the relation of time should disappear" (*Logic*, i. p. 276).

§ 9. The capital objection to resolving any sort of history, either of man or of nature, into science is that thereby its dynamic element is ignored. We may understand an earthquake thoroughly, and yet we can never treat any historical convulsion as equivalent to a chain of theorems.

To the resolution of human history into science there is a further difficulty which Prof. Bosanquet in some measure appreciates. By his phrase "*in the*



*sense of the mere record of remembered fact,"* he wishes to emphasise a distinction of history in the sense of a mere record of the past (such as a series of astronomical observations) from the history that treats of human action. "What we mean by history," he goes on to say (*ibid.* p. 277), "is the revelation of man's nature in action and intelligence." To reduce such history "to a science like abstract mechanics or abstract economics" is, he says with perfect truth, "repugnant to our feelings and inconceivable to our understanding." Thus it is plain that Prof. Bosanquet has in a measure seized the point of our distaste for the intellectualisation of human history; but the remedy he proposes is ineffective:

"If we consider . . . that all nexus is within an individuality, we shall see that history may be received into the intelligible unity of knowledge without sacrificing its concrete import and characteristic significance. This could only be destroyed if we insisted on determining within *what* whole or system we should find the facts of history to be necessarily related."

In other words, the reluctance "to absorb history in science" is regarded by Prof. Bosanquet as justifiable only if that science is one of the type of mechanics. If, however, the science were one of a higher type the absorption would be justified.

But this distinction of Prof. Bosanquet's has not really met the objection to absorbing history in science: he offers 'to heal our hurt too slightly.' Human action, I must point out, exhibits the qualities both of energy and of freedom. Freedom,

we may remark parenthetically, does not mean absence of system: a good human life is a free effort and yet might be systematic throughout; it is a new system which the man made as he went along. Now, as dynamic, human history is necessarily temporal; in regard to it the relation of time can never disappear. As free, human history can never disappear into *any* system of hypothetical judgment, and, in regard to the human history which is still in the future, complete ground can never do duty for cause and effect; the reason being, not that human history is devoid of system, but that the system which it exhibits in its progress is new and therefore unpredictable. Altogether, the absorption of history in science is not merely an unattainable but a false ideal.

§ 10. In speaking of history I have been led to criticise by anticipation the attitude of the panlogist to Personal Life: it is in regard to this that his theory breaks down most decisively. In a world of static thought-contents there is no room for persons whose life is a process of willing and striving: and thus the tendency of panlogism is always to treat personal existence as something of an illusion. We shall see later how the panlogistic tendency generally is to absorb the individual into his social or political environment. Very significant is the attitude of some Anglo-Hegelians to the question of human existence after death. Regarding personality almost as a necessary evil they do not want it prolonged beyond the minimum limit: the most



that they can bid us look forward to is absorption in the Universal Reason. A denial of personal immortality is one of the shibboleths of panlogism.

§ 11. We come now to consider intellectualism in its relation to the various philosophic disciplines. First in order I would take Psychology: in which the difficulties of intellectualism centre round sensation and volition.

On the principles of panlogism a thorough treatment of psychological facts is impossible. No one in recent years has attempted to panlogise psychology; and, as knowledge advances, the enterprise grows more unpromising. It is in the case of Sensation that the difficulties reach perhaps their highest point.

Science can account so little for the characteristics of Sensation that in this province the psychologist is compelled to describe rather than to explain: very sparingly may he indulge in deduction. But the panlogist must be deductive or nothing; and thus Hegel treats 'sensibility' as a necessary stage in the self-development of spirit in the following style:

"Sensibility (feeling) is the form of the dull stirring, the inarticulate breathing, of the spirit through its unconscious and unintelligent individuality, where every definite feature is still 'immediate,'—neither specially developed in its content nor set in distinction as objective to subject, but treated as belonging to its most special, its natural peculiarity" (*P.M.* p. 21).

The special senses are deduced in the most cursory way as follows:

"The senses form the simple system of corporeity specified. (a) The 'ideal' side of physical things breaks up into two—because in it, as immediate and not yet subjective ideality, distinction appears as mere variety—the senses of definite *light*, and of *sound*. The 'real' aspect similarly is with its difference double: (b) the senses of smell and taste, (c) the sense of solid reality, of heavy matter, of heat and shape" (*P.M.* p. 23).

It is hardly necessary to say that in England no one has attempted to follow up these attempts to deduce sensation. Those who sympathise with Hegelianism accordingly take one of two courses. They either say in general terms that 'thought must always be understood to contain its own material,' and leave the matter so; or they fall back on what Mr. Bradley calls 'phenomenalism.' This phrase simply means that in psychology we are to give up metaphysical presuppositions and investigate from the standpoint of ordinary common-sense. Some thinkers add to this a proviso that all the results so obtained are utterly provisional and fragmentary, and that we may some day look for a higher synthesis in which they will be transformed.

§ 12. A glance at the contents-table of any standard text-book of psychology will show that, when sensation has been left out of account, a large portion of the remainder deals with Volition in its various forms. The results of modern psychological analysis justify us in affirming with greater confidence than ever that in volitional experience there is an element which cannot be reduced to any of the other recognised elements of mind, and certainly

not to thought. To thought, however, it must, on panlogistic principles, be reduced; or, to speak strictly, must be regarded as a development from thought. "The will is a special way of thinking; it is thought translating itself into reality; it is the impulse of thought to give itself reality" (*P.R.* p. 11). In the *Encyclopedia* volition is explained under the division of "Mind Practical," developing out of "Theoretical Mind" and developing into "Free Mind."

Volition is the psychological heading which has received most attention from Mr. F. H. Bradley. There are several strands of thought in Mr. Bradley's writings, and his advocacy of the Absolute is better known than his intellectualism: 'ut, after all, intellectualism seems to be more fundamental with him. His explanation of will is a characteristic modification of Hegel's. Hegel says that "will is a self-realisation of *the* Idea"; Mr. Bradley says that "will is the self-realisation of *an* idea." Here is the statement in full; the general impression it leaves is that it consists of Hegelian doctrine transmuted into terms which make it applicable to the individual mind:

"It is will when an idea produces its existence. A feature in present existence, not in harmony with that and working apart from it, gives itself another existence in which it is realised and where it is both idea and fact. And will is not a faculty or a separate kind of phenomenon. It is merely one special result of general laws and conditions, the main law of individuation with its branches, Blending and Contiguity (Redintegration). If an idea

works itself out ideally and subject to identity—the process is thought. If, on the other hand, it produces fact in which its character and existence are no longer discrepant, the process is will" ("On Pleasure, Pain, and Volition," in *Mind*, No. 49, p. 25).

This is one way in which Mr. Bradley puts it, and he has, I believe, never retired from the position, though in other statements he expresses himself in rather different terms. But all along he ignores the element of decision in volitional action, and, ignoring this element, cannot explain why one idea realises itself and another does not. Every day we have, each of us, scores of ideas which we merely 'entertain' and do not act upon: of some of these unacted ideas everything may be said which Mr. Bradley says of acted ideas. They may be ideas which are not in harmony with present existence, or ideas of a change with which I feel myself one; they may even be ideas of a change which I want. But unless I decide to make the change the ideas will not realise themselves. The facts that can be adduced in the contrary sense consist of little more than some cases of the non-voluntary action of thought on body, such as the watering of the mouth at the suggestion of food, and the inclination which people of weak nerves feel when looking over a precipice to throw themselves down. But introspection is enough to show that such automatic or quasi-automatic cases are quite different from the fully conscious decision which Mr. Bradley tries to explain by them.

§ 13. The one side of personal experience in which the intellectualist has achieved a certain measure of success is Knowledge: it would be a pity were the case otherwise, since it is to logic that he has sacrificed, or, as Bacon would say, enslaved, the rest of philosophy. But even this success has been very partial. The intellectualist has kept in view only one kind of knowledge, and that not the most important or typical, the knowledge of abstract science: and through this onesidedness he has failed in explaining abstract science itself, and has left unanswered the most interesting and pressing questions about the nature of knowledge and its function in the totality of human life.

A typically intellectualist view of knowledge is to be found in an essay on the "Goal of Knowledge" by Prof. J. H. Muirhead (in *Mind*, N.S., No. 24, p. 476 *sq.*).

"We may," he says, "describe the end of knowledge as a concept or mode of apprehending the world in which, as in the developed organism, the processes of differentiation and integration have been brought to completion in a fully articulated system of coherent judgments." And he continues: "Knowledge may thus be said to aim in the first place at its own expansion. It seeks to embrace reality in all its parts or details. It aims in the second place at explanation. It seeks to understand the relation of the parts to one another, and to the whole to which they belong. Its ideal may thus be schematised as a whole of clear and distinct parts related to one another in such a way that the mind can pass from any one along the lines of judgment and inference to any other, with the result that the whole is seen to be reflected into every part, and every part to contain the whole. Whether

the world can ever thus be reduced to complete transparency is a question with which we need not trouble ourselves at present ; it is sufficient to note not only that all science proceeds upon the assumption that it can, but that those sciences which are most advanced, and which as 'deductive' are commonly taken as the types of completeness and certainty, really do to a certain extent exhibit these characteristics. Thus geometry aims in the first place at exhausting and in the second place at proving the interconnection of the properties of the figures with which it deals, and it would not be difficult to throw the knowledge we derive from it as to any particular figure, *e.g.* the triangle, into a form which would exhibit the properties of the figure as such and of each of the separate species of it (if it has species) as necessary deductions from its own nature and as thus inherently related to one another through their common relation to the whole whose properties they are."

Professor Muirhead is, of course, not alone in his admiration for the geometrical form of knowledge. Geometry is constantly quoted by intellectualist logicians as the type of science: it is, as we see, regarded by them as consisting of a systematic arrangement of fixed abstract concepts linked together by connections of the utmost stringency. Nor is it the matter only which is regarded as giving it superiority to ordinary concrete knowledge: it is superior also in the motives with which it inspires the student. The ideal geometrician, so the intellectualist would suggest, is one who works entirely from intellectual curiosity, as indifferent to utility as Aristotle's God absorbed to all eternity in the study of his own perfection.

Now the fault of such a view of knowledge is



that it fails to show the connection with the rest of personal life. It is not as though Prof. Muirhead, like Hegel, were speaking of knowledge as impersonal, that is, as it exists for an absolute consciousness: in the manner of English logicians, it is finite knowledge with which he deals. But, if knowledge is a personal affair, it must arise out of the needs, be moulded by the affections, and penetrated by the general principles of personal life.

§ 14. This is the more plainly evident the deeper the questions we raise about knowledge. The deepest of all relates to its Interest: before the question whether a piece of information is intelligible or true there comes the question, 'Is it interesting?' If it is not interesting, if it does not make any sort of appeal, it is simply ignored; the question of its truth never arises.

Before this most fundamental of logical questions the intellectualist is almost helpless; his stock phrase is 'the love of knowledge for its own sake.' Unless this is to be understood as a bare tautology—man is interested in knowledge because he is interested in knowledge—it must mean that the pursuit of knowledge is to be explained through the sentiment of purposeless curiosity. Now mere curiosity certainly does play a considerable part in knowledge, as people find who have to teach children; but it is very inadequate as a complete explanation.

The most obvious and most important motive to the acquirement of knowledge is the direct utility-

interest. On this we hardly need enlarge. The least smattering of anthropology is enough to show that man's impulse to learn about things comes first from his need to further the life of self and family: curiosity, though not wanting in primitive man, is a very subordinate motive and cannot stir him to any prolonged or strenuous exertion. And this primitive connection of need with knowledge is never broken: a look round our friends is enough to convince us that men's intellectual interests go mainly in the same line as their professional occupations. Nor is this a matter of regret: when knowledge is quite cut off from utility it is always in danger of sinking into dreamy dilettantism.

Beside the direct utility-interest there is an indirect utility-interest which shades off from it by fine gradations. As having reference not merely to self but to family and friends, utility is not a vulgar principle but a noble one, consecrating all that is connected with it. For a prosperous man the details of his profession gather interest by many subtle associations from home, wife, children, dependants, and the circle of beneficent activities which professional success renders possible. If the profession ceases to be lucrative, interest in learning about it declines in a way which can not be adequately accounted for on crudely mercenary grounds.

There is, moreover, in knowledge an element of self-assertion which intellectualism can take no account of. In forming a body of knowledge, par-



ticularly knowledge which is in some measure due to discovery, there is something of the same gratification as in making an active career. And this is so even in cases where no practical use is made of the knowledge.

A loftier motive of study which intellectualism is inclined to claim, but to which it has no right, is the sentimental. What this means may be illustrated by a case which often happens, the case of a man who is engaged on some commercial pursuit, say banking, and yet feels attracted to some academic line of research, say the history of ancient Greece. For such a case both the utilitarian and intellectualist explanations fail us: the motive of study is a sentiment towards the old Greek civilisation, which certainly brings no material profit, and yet is not a matter of mere thinking. Such a spirit in the student is nothing exceptional, though for the sake of clearness I have taken my illustration from the amateur. An interest in history, which is not professionally dry-as-dust, is an interest in persons, their characters and fortunes: the story of the past is a poor thing if it does not unroll a drama before us. Sentiment is the mainspring of all antiquarianism. It is even at the bottom of the study of nature: the lore of earth and its children never rouses the true scientific ardour except in the breast of one who can invest natural objects with a quasi-personality. Students of this type cannot fairly be claimed by intellectualism as followers of knowledge for its own sake. Love is something

more than curiosity ; and the sentimental feeling just exemplified is love in a weaker and less personal form.

§ 15. When these are subtracted from the sum of motives inducing men to study there is left the mere Curiosity of which the intellectualists have made so much. The accumulation of knowledge from the pleasure of gratuitous intellectual exercise is common enough, but its meaning is distorted in the intellectualist view, because it is taken out of its proper context and subordination. The taste for gratuitous exercise of the mind is closely parallel to that for gratuitous exercise of the body. After a period of rest the *mens sana* craves for one as much as the *corpus sanum* for the other : in both there is a surplus of energy to be dissipated. But we must remember that the surplus would never have been there but for the pre-existence of an organisation which has grown strong by being used for working. This is the subordinateness in the 'love of knowledge for its own sake' which the intellectualist ignores. He commits the paradox of assuming that the knowledge-interest which starts from utility and has reference all through to utility, to self-assertion, and to sentiment, ought in its maturity to divorce itself from these connections, and suffice to itself and sustain itself as a love of intellectual gymnastic. He suggests that the accomplished but amateur mathematician unendingly working out intricate and useless problems is the type of epistemoniac satisfaction.

§ 16. The interest, then, which pushes men on to seek knowledge is a much more dynamic affair than intellectualism recognises. This causes the intellectualist to go astray in his treatment of the Forms of Knowledge : he is too prone to describe knowledge as an arrangement of static forms. Prof. Bosanquet adopts as the keynote of his treatment a comparison made by the late Alfred Robinson between the forms of judgment and the forms of flowers or plants (*Logic*, i. p. vii.) ; but he interprets it in the spirit of Aristotle rather than in that of Darwin : though his "Morphology of Knowledge" speaks often of development, he never rises above the static point of view. This absence of dynamic reference has very unfortunate results for the intelligibility of his presentation. If we arrange the various judgments in ascending order of complexity, as Prof. Bosanquet does, we ought to justify the arrangement by regarding them as progressively successful attempts by the subject to understand his environment and himself. Apart from this reference to an effort to understand, it is unintelligible why there should be just these forms, and why from one the subject should pass over into another. Any of Prof. Bosanquet's transitions will illustrate this latter point. We begin, he says, with the Judgment of Quality and pass upward to a slightly more definite type, the Demonstrative Judgment. But why should the mind pass upward ? Why not stay where it was ? The need for dynamic explanation is perhaps most strikingly evident in the case of

the Judgments of Measurement, called by Prof. Bosanquet 'divergent' species of judgment. For, hearing that they are divergent, we ask at once why they diverge. Why should the mind run off, so to speak, upon a side-path and invent these curious forms? The obvious answer, from which, however, Prof. Bosanquet is excluded, is that they are invaluable helps to us in our task of understanding and mastering reality.

§ 17. Missing as it does the most essential characteristic of the whole thought-process, intellectualism cannot explain either the conceptions or the functions which are fundamental to knowledge. One of these conceptions, Interest, has been dealt with by anticipation in a recent section: the other two are Intelligibility and Truth.

In objecting to intellectualism that it can give no account of Intelligibility, I am not making the unreasonable demand that intelligible thinking should be reduced to something else. Thought is an ultimate fact, and intelligible thinking is just thinking in the full sense of the term. But a theory of knowledge ought to give an explanation of the distinction between the intelligible and the unintelligible; and I contend that this cannot be done without reference to our active life. In the phantasmagoria of a dream we have an example of unintelligibility; trees talk and turn into men, we ourselves get strangely confused with other people. Now why is all this unintelligible? 'Because it is inconsistent' is the only answer that intellectualism

can give us. But inconsistent with what? The question takes us right beyond intellectualism: nowhere can we find a criterion of consistency save in the nature and activity of man himself. What-ever a man can do and be in acting out the normal purposes of his life is intelligible. And this is the standard of intelligibility.

§ 18. Let us now consider Truth. It has been the aim of preceding sections (§§ 14 *sq.*) to show the primacy of the conception of Interest. Before we ask of any statement 'Is it true?' we ask, tacitly or explicitly, 'Is it relevant or interesting?' If in the course of discussion a totally irrelevant statement is made, we ignore it and think ill of the maker: we do not consider its truth at all. This subordinateness of truth to interest has a very important influence upon our conception of truth. According to the current definition, which the intellectualist endorses, truth is the correspondence of thought with fact. But this current definition contains an implication which intellectualism must exclude; for every one recognises that thought can never correspond completely with concrete fact. In the first place, complete correspondence is impossible; and, secondly, even if it were possible, it would be useless. We only seek for correspondence so far as is necessary to satisfy the interest which prompted us to start upon that particular line of inquiry. The need or interest which prompts us is a sort of interrogation, and the information which satisfies us is a sort of answer.

In ordinary or non-scientific inquiry the amount of correspondence necessary to constitute truth is extremely variable. Being very hungry we ask for bread. If we are told that there is bread in the cupboard, and go to look, we treat the answer as true if we find in the cupboard something near enough to satisfy our want. We do not care if what we find does not answer to the technical definition of bread, but should rather be called 'damper.' On the other hand, we should treat the answer as false if the person to whom we addressed the inquiry told us, knowing we were hungry, that there was bread in the cupboard, and we found a loaf there which from some accident had been rendered uneatable.

In scientific inquiry the correspondence is closer, because scientific purposes cannot otherwise be satisfied; but the principles which determine the correspondence remain the same. In the first place it is always some definite line of interest that we pursue. The scientist does not research into the nature of bread in general, but sets out to solve some definite problem, such as the nutritive efficiency of bread as compared with other common foods, or its digestibility, or the amount of nitrogen in it, or its power of resisting putrefaction. This limitation of the extent of inquiry is not duly kept in view by intellectualism. Prof. Bosanquet's dictum "The ultimate and complete judgment would be the whole of Reality predicated of itself" (*Essentials of Logic*, p. 41) implies that the function

of any finite judgment is to contribute to the "ultimate and complete" judgment, and, therefore, that no judgment can include too much. For the intellectualist logician scientific inquiry must be an indiscriminate voracity for definition.

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Moreover there is an intensive limitation. When the scientist has made his results precise enough to satisfy his line of interest he ceases to strive for further precision. Some investigations into the nature of bread are obviously more exacting than others, but hardly ever should we require the same nicety as is needed, say, for an astronomical observation. Often researches are made more precise than they need be, partly from pride of good workmanship, partly in order that later investigators, possibly with other interests in view, may build upon them with confidence.

All these considerations on the subordination of truth to relevance or interest are superficially obscured by the prevalence of a kind of literature peculiar to an age of diffused popular knowledge. I refer to compendia of the character of encyclopedia-articles which undertake to tell us everything about some familiar topic. Books "All about Bread" or "All about the Sun" have the appearance of viewing their object-matter from the standpoint of absolute omniscience. But the appearance is superficial: what the compiler really does is to think of the lines of general interest and to collect information about them from specialists. Any one purchaser is not likely to find more than part of the



work interesting: *der Vieles bringt wird Manchem etwas bringen*. The only person who is quite interested all through is either the inquisitive child, or that by-product of civilisation, the merely desultory reader. The more naturally written and more naturally instructive kind of work is the monograph.

§ 19. In the foregoing strictures on intellectualism I have been dealing with matters which are in some degree of common interest, and on which I have been able to make frequent appeal to common sense. But the Functions of Knowledge, judgment, inference, and supposal, which fall to be considered next, are matters rather beyond the ordinary layman's ken. There is consequently no common opinion to appeal to, and the following arguments against established views will labour under the disadvantages that attend unlooked-for innovation. To prove a new theory of logical functions would need a long and very elaborate digression, and thus I must be content with stating the matter briefly, to show that so important a subject has not been overlooked.<sup>1</sup>

Well, then, the established account of judgment and the other epistemonical functions overlooks the intimate connection between thought and action. Judgment hitherto has been identified rather with the passive recognition of existing facts than with the active execution of purposes. Passive recognition may be exemplified by a judgment such as

<sup>1</sup> The passage following is condensed from a paper called "The Logic of Pragmatism" in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, N.S. vol. iii.



Prof. Bosanquet is wont to quote as typical, 'Here's a table' (*Essentials of Logic*, p. 41); and the opposed form by an expression of active resolve, 'I'll bring a table.' The reasons for preferring the active judgment as the typical form are twofold. First, the recognitive judgment is obviously subsidiary to something beyond it: we should not say 'Here's a table' unless we had some purpose in view for which the table would be helpful. Secondly, it is impossible to imagine how we can understand things so as to form judgments about them unless we can act. Even in its simplest form judgment deals with systematic contents; and how can we get to understand what system is except by acting systematically?

If this view of judgment is sound, a great change is needed in accepted explanations of the other functions of knowledge. Deductive Inference will be, primarily, the process by which, having formed a plan, we reason to the details necessary for its realisation; Inductive Inference will be the invention of a plan to meet a situation which calls upon us for action. The cogency of a deduction with reference to any detail will depend on the indispensableness of that detail to the execution of the plan. The static inferences of abstract science, which are the examples ordinarily alleged to illustrate the inferential function, are, in truth, only intelligible through the active or dynamic forms. Most notable of all, perhaps, is the change in the place to be assigned to Supposal. Prof. Bosanquet

is expressing the orthodox intellectualist view when he says: "I contend that supposal is rather the intrusion of a non-logical feature into cognition than a logical attitude" (*Knowledge and Reality*, p. 44). The view of thought-functions just expounded requires us, on the contrary, to hold that supposal is essential to cognition just because it is essential to discovery and creation. In every real 'step forward' there must be a hypothetical forecasting of the result of the step. On the dynamic view it is in steps forward that knowledge is most truly exemplified; and thus the supposal attitude must have a permanent, not accidental, place in cognition.

§ 20. We are now in position to turn back and criticise Prof. Muirhead's account of the Goal of Knowledge, which seems to me to summarise all the errors of the intellectualist view. He told us, it will be remembered, that the ideal to which the man of knowledge aspires is the reduction of the universe to a condition of complete transparency, so that knowledge may reach the condition of a fully articulated system of coherent judgments, each one of which implies all the rest. Now, if we take this seriously, we must assume that what Prof. Muirhead looks forward to is the power of complete prediction applied as much to persons as to physical phenomena. By taking the trouble to make the calculations we shall know what the Poet Laureate's next effusion will be before it is written, and what the amount of Mr. Carnegie's next benefaction before it is donated. We shall know the moral

successes and failures of our neighbours and ourselves years beforehand with the certainty of the Nautical Almanac.

But how absurdly chimerical and dreary this 'goal' of knowledge strikes us when set forth in definite terms! It is only fair to the intellectualist school to doubt whether they are much in earnest with it. About this very passage of Prof. Muirhead's essay the late Prof. Ritchie, who sympathised with it strongly, wrote, "It is not a prospect any *finite* mind can enjoy or suffer. It is nevertheless the ideal of complete knowledge."<sup>1</sup> Now, is such language really applicable to any 'goal' in the natural sense of the term? Surely a goal is something that you try to get, hope to get, and expect to like when got. But Prof. Muirhead's goal of knowledge would seem to be a state the attainableness of which we need not trouble ourselves to discuss, and the agreeableness of which is utterly problematical. Can all this be anything more than a roundabout way of admitting that the intellectualist goal of knowledge is not an object of human endeavour at all; but is a conception which some thinkers deem themselves bound to believe in, though it involves the negation of all that is most valuable and interesting in the world? Its dreariness is due to its attempt to assimilate creative human action to the behaviour of lifeless nature, in which elements actually or potentially knowable and calculable do no

<sup>1</sup> MS. note *penes nos.*

more than enter into more or less complex combinations.

If we were challenged to produce our own ideal of knowledge we ought, I think, first to lay it down that the ideal must in any case be human. And in determining it we must put into the forefront the distinction between the active and passive sides of experience, a distinction which is no less important in this sphere than elsewhere. In some processes of acquiring knowledge we are docile, receptive, using our initiative but little; in others, especially where, as in literary composition or in planning and scheming, we are exercising creative power, initiative is at its maximum. In the human ideal of knowledge ('ideal' not 'goal,' for 'goal' implies finality) the more active kind of knowledge should prevail and the less active kind be subordinate. This consideration should weigh with educators. No one needs a universal education: Browning's Grammarian who "decided not to live but know" was a foolish pedant, like Goethe's Faust before he took his regenerating plunge into life. The ideal for each man is to do as much creative thinking as he gets opportunity for, and to have acquired by docility as much instruction-knowledge as will help in the creative function.

§ 21. Of the influence of intellectualism in morals there is less to be said, because so much less has been done in England by way of ethical construction from this standpoint. In T. H. Green the

intellectualist influence is more apparent on the metaphysical than on the ethical side: Mr. Bradley's *Ethical Studies* is not in the form of a systematic treatise. But, even so, we have enough to show the tendency of intellectualism on certain cardinal points of ethical interpretation.

A good result of the Hegelian panlogism for ethics has been to bring out the significance of moral institutions as distinguishable from individual character. Though institutions take effect and have value only by their influence on individual character, we must, to understand morality, take account of something beyond character. The fact is that men and women, as combined and co-operating in institutions, exhibit a different quality from what can be discerned in the individuals: we cannot collect the quality, so to speak, by scrutinising the individuals one by one. The fact will be rendered plainer by instancing other corporate institutions less subtle and momentous than those of morality. Take such cases as our national games. A foreigner could never understand cricket and the cricketing spirit by converse with individual athletic Englishmen: he must see the game in action, and to understand it all round must learn to play himself, however badly. The significance of institutions is very apt to be underrated by extreme individualism.

Again, the Anglo-Hegelian movement has done good so far as it has taught Englishmen that their traditional preoccupation with the individual has made them overlook to some extent a most impor-

tant virtue, Social Loyalty. The life of social loyalty is one which is lived in sympathy with what Hegel calls the ethos of one's people; a sympathy without which it is impossible to be a good citizen. In the sphere of public life a man imbued with the national ethos will show the best qualities of patriotism, faith in the mission of his race, affection for national virtues and admiration for the heroes who embody them, adoption of the national modes of thought even when conscious of their limitations, devotion to national customs and institutions, anxiously reverential handling of the established order on occasions of reform. In the smaller sphere of social relations a man of the common ethos exhibits a quality which does not figure much in moral science, but is well-known colloquially as 'decent.' The decent man is kindly and tolerant, never offends much against the popular standard of morals, and makes no excessive fuss about popular vices. Such is social loyalty, which has transformed and, in some degree, absorbed the more primitive loyalty of personal allegiance. In civilised life personal loyalty can hardly come to its best unless the leader be regarded as embodying or supporting a valuable social principle.

But high as social loyalty must rank, I believe that a sound moral theory will put Conscientiousness still higher. This may be somewhat obscured by the associations of the term 'conscientious,' which rather suggests a crabbed, motive-fingerling spirit, with too much introspection to be vigorously



useful; it may even remind us of the crankiness of the 'conscientious objector.' But, in the sense in which I use it, a 'conscientious' man is one who trusts his own moral judgment, who lives not merely by the routine of respectability or by social sympathy, but is the self-reliant helmsman of his own course. The term is meant to include the active, forward-looking part of conduct no less than the introspective and retrospective. In this sense, surely, conscience is the higher side of virtue: for sometimes it is necessary that conscience should conflict with loyalty, and override it. And here comes the mistake of panlogism: it is characteristic of panlogistic moralists that they reverse the relative value of these two elements of moral experience. Hegel's preference of *Sittlichkeit* over *Moralität* is the keynote of his ethical views so far as they apply to practice. Mr. Bradley's advocacy of station-and-duties as the supreme ethical formula, set off with a great deal of fine invective against the hyper-conscientious and the individualist, is nothing but an anglicisation of the same principle. Hegel's ethical preference follows immediately from his metaphysic. Both the individual and society have to be explained somehow as elements of the static cosmos of thought-contents which is the truly real. But society as an organised, relatively permanent system can be explained as an element of such a cosmos much more easily than the individual, because it may be regarded more easily as a thought-content or concrete universal. It is there-

fore to be regarded in all cases as higher and more real.

§ 22. The Social Loyalty that comes in for eulogy in Mr. Bradley's *Ethical Studies* is a virtue that we recognise at once : but the question must be put whether the consistent intellectualist is entitled to that version of it. Truly interpreted, that loyalty should, as I hold, be something active ; it should be the passionate affirmation and active fulfilment of principles which are recognised as commanding devotion. But the pure intellectualist, if he is consistent, must interpret social loyalty intellectually : only by an amiable inconsistency can he recognise the element of devotion. He must think of society merely as a system of very intricate relations, something like an enormous game of chess where human beings are the chessmen. To see what social loyalty means we have only to imagine the chessmen conscious. The person devoid of social loyalty, the social slave in fact, will be like the piece who submits to his moves without thought or interest : the patriot will understand his moves in their relation to the great game in which he shares, and will feel keen satisfaction in the understanding. By such an interpretation of social loyalty the intellectualist gets rid incidentally of social discontent. As no reasonable chessman would wish to be queen rather than pawn (since the intellectual satisfaction from the game is as great for one as for the other), so no good citizen will fret to be a gilded youth instead of a chimney-sweeper.



"One place performs like any other place  
the proper service every place on earth  
was framed to furnish man with"

(quoted in *E.S.* p. 183).

There can be no radicalism in a good pawn.<sup>1</sup>

§ 23. Let us turn now to the more serious misinterpretation of Conscientious Action. The critical and constructive activity of Conscience is of two kinds. On the one hand we are active as working in the stream of empirical change and circumstance; we choose among alternative courses, repel temptations to error, and guard against our natural inclination to follow the line of least resistance. This day-by-day business of moral work is always fatally ignored by the theorist of the static view. But just now I want to speak of that other and more inward kind of conscientiousness which consists in the choice and development of principles of action. Reasonable action implies a consistent development of principles in accordance with the agent's needs and moral judgment. In explaining this development there are two opposite mistakes to avoid; one is the parody of libertarianism which represents the developing action of the agent as an exercise of arbitrary caprice; the other is that static-intellectualist view of morals which represents the agent as watching quietly while the principles spontaneously evolve in virtue of their own immanent principle of growth.

<sup>1</sup> I am not attributing *all* the views just criticised to Mr. Bradley; but he is in harmony with their spirit when he writes, "The non-theoretical person, if he be not immoral, is at peace with reality" (*E.S.* p. 166). I wish I could think this optimistic statement true. Is the Russian moujik a theoretical person, or is he immoral? Nearer home Mr. Bradley might have learned much if he had ever dropped into conversation with such a person as a London "bus-driver.

The sit-still-and-watch-it-grow doctrine of conscientious action is really involved in Mr. Bradley's explanation of volition as the self-realisation of an idea: but it may be illustrated in detail from Prof. Bosanquet's *Psychology of the Moral Self*. Prof. Bosanquet raises the question, Does will involve desire? and in the course of discussing it says:

"We may point out that in some cases where volition is *most* deliberate, the element of desire seems most conspicuously absent. When, for instance, we approach a very important decision, such as changing our residence or profession, or taking a particular line in any kind of policy, for which we have weeks or months in which to prepare, in such cases as these we can hardly be said to verify [*i.e.* observe the presence of] desire. Our decision is more like a necessity gradually revealing itself."

Further on he says of a case of decision:

"The actual feeling accompanying the decision, or act of will, *might* be more like that of being absorbed in an idea than like that of giving effect to desire; it would be a sort of necessity, following from the circumstances, and taking shape in your decision. When," continues Prof. Bosanquet, "I am asked the reasons for supporting certain measures, I *may* answer that I desire them or am averse to them; but the fundamental answer would seem to be, 'because they agree with, or are contrary to, all my ideas on the subject.' In the first case there is simply desire or aversion; in the second there is the conception of a system of ideas working themselves out into a consistent whole" (pp. 79 *sq.*).

I do not mean to say that there are no facts in our experience to support this analysis of Prof. Bosanquet's. Men who have irrevocably settled upon a general course of action, more especially men in middle life who know their own minds,

develop their characteristic purposes so steadily and yet so pliantly that conduct almost seems to 'work itself out' spontaneously. But a deeper analysis will show that the steady pressure of the agent's volition is there and cannot be relaxed for a moment. Such cases, however, are not really typical; we must study rather those spiritual crises in which purposes originate. And here the element of volitional decision stands out too plainly to be ignored.

§ 24. This leads us to consider the attitude of intellectualism to Free-Will. After centuries of debate free-will still remains the crucial problem of philosophy: not only in ethics, but in every other branch of thought, sound views are hopeless if we misunderstand human volition. I know that it is rather the fashion to assume that the question will never be settled decisively; but, however that may be, it is at present involved in quite gratuitous difficulties: there is no justification for the common Hegelian dilemma which requires us to choose between the indeterminism of idiocy and the 'soft' determinism which quite absurdly arrogates to itself the title of a doctrine of freedom. What the agent really does in moral choice may be illustrated from the arts. Suppose that the poet has written half his ode, and is thinking about the remainder. Now this remainder neither grows of itself, nor ought its character to be determined by the mere caprice of the poet. It *may* be determined capriciously; but in that case the ode will be a very bad one; a good

poem has impressed upon it a unity of character that gives its component parts a fitness above caprice. So it is with the development of moral principles: the agent makes the system of their development and makes them develop according to the system.

It is hardly necessary to point out that a pan-logistic philosophy must either deny free-will outright, or make a show of satisfying the libertarian instinct by some empty phrase. What Mr. Bosanquet thinks on the subject is plain from the extracts in the preceding section: Mr. Bradley in his *Ethical Studies* stands simply upon Hegelian ground; while in *Appearance and Reality* (p. 435) he treats free-will roundly as "a mere lingering chimera," which no self-respecting writer can any longer be called upon to treat seriously. All this is just as we might have expected. What is less familiar is that T. H. Green also is not a libertarian in any intelligible sense: as we shall see later (chap. viii. § 23), his freedom of the will is merely Kantian and noumenal.

§ 25. For Political Philosophy a few words will suffice. As we have already seen, Hegel's exaltation of the State is to be explained by the fact that it can be regarded more easily than the individual as a thought-content or concrete universal. The following extract indicates his estimate of its value and functions:

"The State, which is the realised substantive will, having its reality in the particular self-consciousness raised to

the plane of the Universal, is absolutely rational. This substantive unity is its own motive and absolute end. In this end freedom obtains its highest right. This end has the highest right over the individual whose highest duty in turn is to be a member of the state" (*P.R.* p. 240).

The state, he continues in further passages, is "the embodiment of reason" (p. 242), "the march of God in the world" (p. 247), "the embodiment of concrete freedom" (p. 248).

"This Universal principle [*i.e.* the state, otherwise termed "the self-conscious ethical substance"], with all its evolution in detail, is the absolute aim and content of the knowing subject, which thus identifies itself in its volition with the system of reasonableness" (*P.M.* p. 131).

In the same spirit Mr. Bradley affirms that by merging into so divine and perfect an existence as the "social organism" the individual will find his whole end, "self-realisation, duty, and happiness in one" (*E.S.* p. 148). This then is the political doctrine which the Anglo-Hegelians suggest for our acceptance when they bid us "close our Bentham and open our Hegel."

§ 26. The fatal flaw about this political philosophy is that it leaves no room for the criticism and reform of existing states by individuals. Hegel does indeed from time to time speak of bad or imperfect States; but he does not make it clear how the individual can set up to criticise an institution which gives him all his value and reality. Questions of practical reform he never touches on. The same difficulty occurs to one in reading Prof. Bosanquet's *Philosophical Theory of the State*, an

interesting book which provokes the wish that the author had relied less on Hegel and more on his own experience of social work: he might have strengthened it considerably by ampler recognition of what may be called Charity Organisation principles, which one would not have expected to be absent from Prof. Bosanquet's mind. Surely self-reliance and personal initiative are all important in the making, managing, and reforming of states. The neglect of the imperfections of existing states is the main point of a criticism of the book by Mr. Sidney Ball:

"The general effect of Mr. Bosanquet's treatment is to suggest that, in as much as the idea of a state is realised wherever there is a state, any particular state is entitled to rather more than the credit it gets from answering the idea of a state at all. Does not," he continues, "the argument itself demand that more stress should be laid on the partial character of the realisation of the ideal attained by any actual community?" ("Current Sociology" in *Mind*, N.S., No. 38, pp. 158 sq.).

The England of King Stephen and the England of to-day are both 'states.' Prof. Bosanquet says that for purposes of theoretical investigation one may be assumed to be about as good as another, "just as the nature of life is represented pretty nearly as well by one living man as by another" (*Philosophical Theory of the State*, p. 251). This seems to be a highly disputable assumption. Does the Hottentot represent the "nature of life" pretty nearly as well as the cultured Englishman? And is it a matter of indifference which of the two we



take for any purpose of theoretical investigation? However, this is quite a minor objection: the point I wish to emphasise is that, though Prof. Bosanquet recognises different sorts of states, he does not tell us anything about the agencies which transform the lower into the higher, except so far as "social logic" (a very significant phrase) is occasionally referred to (p. 315). Or would Prof. Bosanquet argue that, just as discovery is an accident of knowledge (*Logic* i. p. 8), so reform is a negligible accident of politics?

In their neglect of political improvement and the agencies which cause it, the Anglo-Hegelians are much more to blame than Hegel, because they disregard the light of knowledge which he did not enjoy: the static modes of thought to which they cling have quite been superseded by modern science. That Hegel is a thoroughly 'static' philosopher is superficially covered by his varnish of dialectical development. When we scratch this off we find that the only real development he believed in was one which led up to his own system and the Prussian constitution. But, thanks to Darwin, we know now that even the Prussian constitution cannot be final. As political organisation is relative to the individuals organised, and as there is no finality about individual development, there can be no finality about political development: change and adaptation, in other words continuous reform, is essential to the efficiency of the modern state. These considerations are so trite that I should be ashamed to adduce them had they not

been systematically neglected. In object-lessons of political improvement we have a huge advantage over Hegel: even the man in the street can tell us that reforms come less by 'social logic' than by personal criticism and agitation. Not a breath of our stirring English political life passes through Prof. Bosanquet's pages. As a corrective to our old national individualism, represented most strikingly by Herbert Spencer, Prof. Bosanquet's Hegelian preference for the state has a justification: but in trying to bend the stick straight he has bent it much too far the other way.

§ 27. On the Philosophy of Art there is little to be said, and of what I am going to say the most part, I fear, might be regarded as not strictly relevant. A consistent panlogism should exhibit art as a stage in the development of the thought-absolute, and this is what Hegel does in the half-dozen pages of the *Encyclopedia* where he explains Art as a category developing out of the State and developing into Revealed Religion.

\* As this [final] consciousness of the Absolute first takes shape, its immediacy produces the factor of finitude in Art. On one hand, that is, it breaks up into a work of external common existence, into the subject which produces that work, and the subject which contemplates and worships it. But, on the other hand, it is the concrete *contemplation* and mental picture of implicitly absolute spirit as the *Ideal*. In this ideal, or the concrete shape born of the subjective spirit, its natural immediacy, which is only a *sign* of the Idea, is so transfigured by the informing spirit in order to express the Idea, that the



figure shows it and it alone—the shape or form of *Beauty*" (*P.M.* p. 169).

His *Vorlesungen über Ästhetik*, in which alone his detailed views have been preserved, are not a mere expansion of the concise sections of the *Encyclopedia*: the influence of the deductive method is always felt; but it does not appear much upon the surface, and the whole subject is treated with immense wealth of concrete illustration and free reference to historical development, sensuous material, and personal activity. An even more elaborate and more systematic treatment of art was made by his pupil, F. T. Vischer, whose great work, *Die Kunst* (4 vols.), follows the strict Hegelian arrangement of numbered sections in distinctive type followed by explanatory "Zusätze."

From the task of criticising the panlogist art-philosophy I am fortunately exempt: it has no followers among us, and may even be said to be practically unknown except to readers of Prof. Bosanquet's *History of Æsthetic*. It is significant that Hegel's *Vorlesungen* have never been translated into English: while of Vischer Prof. Bosanquet sadly remarks:

"There is much in his works that would be of interest to the reader to-day, could it be disengaged from his formal dialectic and from the huge bulk of his volumes. But there is not much, I should imagine, which cannot now be obtained from other sources, and I therefore cannot help fearing that this colossal monument of real knowledge, capacity, and industry will have little effect on the future course of æsthetic science" (*History of Æsthetic*, p. 400).

Prof. Bosanquet does not praise Vischer too highly : he was in addition a man of literary skill and bright sympathetic intelligence. But no gifts would suffice I believe, to make a 'dialectic' philosophy of art persuasive and interesting to Englishmen.

§ 28. At this point, perhaps, I ought to stop ; but for the sake of illustrating my standpoint in relation to art, I should like to offer a little criticism of certain views of Prof. Bosanquet's, though I know that they are considerably removed from consistent intellectualism. He has so much recognition of emotion in art, of personal expression, of the workman's sympathy with the qualities of his material, in short, so much of the traditions of English art-criticism, that the question is always suggesting itself whether his real sympathies are not more akin to those of his critic than to the Hegelianism on which he supposes himself to stand. Another difficulty is that most of his writing is history, not constructive theory. His great work is not even a history of art-philosophy, but a history of the philosophy of the beautiful : it deals less with art than with feelings, or emotions, or sentiments which are anterior to art as a productive process. I do not remember that Prof. Bosanquet explicitly sets forth the relation of art to this anterior consciousness, or even gives a definition of art itself. His doctrine of art can only be got at by inference from the *History of Æsthetic* and elsewhere.

Prof. Bosanquet gives as his definition of beauty "that which has characteristic or individual expres-

siveness for sense-perception or imagination, subject to the conditions of general or abstract expressiveness in the same medium" (*History of Æsthetic*, p. 5). His view of art I gather to be the following: beauty is in one way the antithesis of the object of science. In science, or knowledge *optimi juris*, we have a thought-content expressed in purely rational form: in our experience of beauty, on the other hand, we have a thought-content expressed in the form of feeling. Our beauty-experience may have concrete embodiment, either as natural beauty or as artificial beauty, the latter being objects of art. The productive process of art is motivated by emotion. When a man feels emotion and expresses it immediately and crudely the result is ordinary emotional demonstration. When, however, the expression is reflective, methodical, suited to the medium, and, generally, infused with reason so far as the matter allows, the result is art ("On the Nature of Æsthetic Emotion" in *Mind*, N.S., No. 10, p. 155).

The critic might raise many points of objection to this doctrine, which may or may not summarise accurately what Prof. Bosanquet thinks: but the one I wish to emphasise now is that it tends to ignore both in beauty and in art the dynamic element which these experiences have through their connection with human 'making.' In the highly specialised conditions of modern civilisation, when artists tend to form a class within the community, it is true that the passive attitude of artistic admiration is much

commoner than the active. And thus we lose sight of the fact that the active form is really more typical: the sentiment of beauty attaches primarily to things man makes or understands the making of. I doubt if this reference to making is absent from even the most passive-seeming exclamation, 'How beautiful.' Suppose it to be uttered by a merely non-performing connoisseur as he looks at a sunset. Fully to understand his mental attitude we must remember that beneath its passivity it is penetrated by experiences of production; the sunset will probably suggest pictures seen. Even if it does not, if no thought of Claude or Turner crosses his mind, yet he would hardly appreciate the view unless its lines and tints were attached to an apperceptive system of ideas which has been formed in his mind by contact with artists and works of art. Savages have no appreciation of scenery.

I do not know if the foregoing criticisms really make against Prof. Bosanquet or only against the hypothetical intellectualist, whom, indeed, we constantly meet face to face in philosophical discussion. But in regard to the philosophy of art as distinguished from that of the beautiful, Prof. Bosanquet says enough in his essay on the "Nature of *Æsthetic* Emotion" to lay himself open to the reproach of neglecting the dynamic side of this experience. His words are: "I suggest as the most fundamental and universal feature, from which all the common characteristics of *æsthetic* emotion may be deduced, the simple fact that it is expressed" (p. 156). Now

putting aside the highly disputable question whether the root-impulse of art can be described as an emotion, let us consider whether this term 'expression' sufficiently recognises the fact that art necessarily implies making. Suppose a concrete example; say that a man receives bad news which causes him grief, on the first shock of which he expresses emotion by bursting into tears. This weeping, it will be agreed on all hands, is not art; though Prof. Bosanquet would be hard driven to distinguish it from art on the strict letter of his definition. But now suppose that the shock has passed, and that the mourner sets to expressing his grief in various ways. I contend that you cannot qualify any of these expressions as artistic except in so far as the expression involves making something in a particular spirit which must simply be called 'artistic' because it is not further definable. Expression alone, however reasonable and reflective, will not give us art. Expression of grief may cause the mourner to say prayers, or to make up old quarrels, or to wear crape, or to give alms, or to cease going to dinner-parties, or to order a monument from the stone-mason; but he will not be a jot nearer to the artist. A classic example of a work of art which took its origin in the sorrow of bereavement is, of course, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*; but it would be a totally inadequate account of the poem as an artistic effort to describe it as expressing emotion. One may raise the question, indeed, whether the emotion connected with

art is emotion caused by the object and then expressed in art, or whether it is not rather emotion generated by the success or failure of the artistic process; as when we speak of a painter's joy in his work, or despondency in failure. The place of emotion in art can be illustrated by the simplest example. The prehistoric cave-man is interested for obvious reasons in mammoth; he expresses this interest with the ultimate, indefinable spirit we call 'artistic' by making the beast's outline on a bone; succeeding in his effort, he is pleased and shows the work to friends. Interest, artistic making, emotion of success is the normal sequence of the artist's experience. You can reduce the making neither to the interest that goes before it, nor to the emotion that follows.

§ 29. In the Philosophy of Religion our criticism of intellectualism must be that it bases religion too exclusively on the facts of knowledge. From these facts it deduces the existence of a Being who may, certainly, be called superhuman, but cannot justly be called divine.

An attempt may be made to base religion upon any or all of the three main facts of knowledge: that the world is intelligible, that man has intelligence, and that there is a medium of communication which enables the human intelligence to understand the world. All three facts were present to Plato's mind when he described the Idea of the Good as "that which imparts truth to the known and the power



of knowing to the knower" and is the medium of understanding, as light is the medium that makes the visible world radiant to the seeing eye (*Rep.* vi. 508). Modern epistemological analysis may have deepened and defined the intellectualist conception of God; but it can hardly advance in comprehensiveness upon the outline sketched in this passage of the *Republic*.

An argument for the existence of God based on the intelligibility of the objective world is formulated by T. H. Green in connection with his "Spiritual Principle." In a review of John Caird's *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion*, written two years before his death, he protests against basing a philosophy of religion merely upon "introspective inquiry"; the true basis is "an investigation of the objective world and the source of the relations which determine its content" (*Works*, iii. 143).

"To assume, because all reality requires thought to conceive it, that therefore thought is the condition of its existence, is, indeed, unwarrantable. But it is another matter if, when we come to examine the constituents of that which we account real—the determinations of things—we find that they all imply some synthetic action which we only know as exercised by our own spirit. Is it not true of all of them that they have their being in relations; and what other medium do we know of but a thinking consciousness in and through which the separate can be united in that way which constitutes relation? We believe that these questions cannot be worked out without leading to the conclusion that the real world is essentially a spiritual world, which forms one inter-related

whole because related throughout to a single subject" (*Works*, iii. 145).

One form of the proof of God from the connection which brings subject and object together has been adduced by Dr. Edward Caird in his *Evolution of Religion*:

"Subject and object are the extreme terms in the difference which is essential to our rational life. Each of them presupposes the other, and therefore neither can be regarded as producing the other. Hence, we are compelled to think of them both as rooted in a still higher principle, which is at once the source of their relatively independent existence and the all-embracing unity that limits their independence. This principle, therefore, may be imaged as a crystal sphere that holds them together, and which, through its very transparency, is apt to escape our notice, yet which must always be there as the condition and limit of their operation. To put it more directly, the idea of an absolute unity, which transcends all the oppositions of finitude, and especially the last opposition which includes all others—the opposition of subject and object—is the ultimate presupposition of our consciousness. Hence we cannot understand the real character of our rational life or appreciate the full compass of its movement, unless we recognise as its necessary constituents or guiding ideas, not only the ideas of object and subject, but also the idea of God. The idea of God, therefore—meaning by that, in the first instance, only the idea of an absolute principle of unity which binds in one 'all thinking things, all objects of all thought,' which is at once the source of being to all things that are, and of knowing to all beings that know—is an essential principle, or rather the ultimate essential principle of our intelligence, a principle which must manifest itself in the life of every rational creature. Every creature, who is capable of the consciousness of an objective world and of the consciousness of a self, is capable also of the consciousness of God.



Or, to sum up the whole matter in one word, every rational being as such is a religious being" (*Evolution of Religion*, i. 67 sq.).

It is no part of my present business to say whether a true conception of God should include the element of relating-consciousness (as advocated by Green) and the element of unity-of-subject-and-object (as advocated by Dr. Edward Caird); *prima facie* there seems no reason why it should not. What I have to point out is that from these elements, taken separately or together, we can get no adequate conception of God. To a Relating-Consciousness as such or to a Unity-of-subject-and-object the name of 'God' cannot properly be applied, any more than to the Great First Cause of the eighteenth-century deists. A Being, to deserve that name, must possess at least intelligent agency and exercise moral preference: that which lacks those qualities may be a First Cause or a Spiritual Principle or an Absolute, but is not 'God' in any natural sense of the term. And it goes without saying that an epistemological argument which has proved the existence of a being necessary for the human act of knowledge, has not thereby proceeded a step towards proving the existence of a Being with moral qualities. That must be proved by an additional argument based on ethical grounds. I could hardly desire an apter quotation for illustrating my present criticism than the final words of my extract from the *Evolution of Religion*, "Every rational being as such is a religious being." To such a dictum the obvious answer is that man

cannot be religious merely in virtue of possessing a minimum endowment of intelligence: for, at this rate, none are irreligious but the beasts, and perhaps not all of them. Dr. Caird allows religious quality much too easily both to the Supreme Being and to man.

In philosophy of religion there is a vast amount of unclear thinking which would never be tolerated in any other province of science, and would be extremely annoying if it were not so easy to account for. Few people write on this subject unless they are religious-minded; and to such people certain beliefs have grown so instinctive that they can hardly be brought to realise the need of justifying them by argument. Hence an immense amount of illegitimate assumption: an intensely religious consciousness like T. H. Green's glides absent-mindedly over chasms hopelessly impassable to mere logic. Nor can we leave out of account the traditional attitude of men, determined to obscurity on religious matters by many converging influences: our natural hopes and fears and dim aspirations in a matter immensely important, yet difficult to the clearest-sighted, priestcraft, dogma, superstitious intolerance, the thralldom of custom, the prestige of ancient ceremony, the reverential tenderness for holy things, many influences of many degrees of value have had their share in hindering free and logical inquiry. But for this I doubt if it would ever have been needful to expose the inadequacies of the intellectualist philosophy of religion.

## CHAPTER V

### ABSOLUTISM

§ 1. IF my attempt to define Absolutism and assign its causes was successful (chap. iii. §§ 4-8), it is a theory that is founded deep in human nature and is likely to recur continually in various forms. The philosophies of India, the Neo-Platonists, mediaeval scholastics who took Averroes for their master, churchmen of pantheistic leaning such as Nicholas of Cusa, heretics of the Renaissance such as Giordano Bruno, the race of religious mystics such as Eckhart and Jacob Behmen, together with Spinoza, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer, von Hartmann, and, most interesting of all to us, Mr. F. H. Bradley, profess an absolutism variously tinged by personal idiosyncrasy and by reaction against various antagonistic principles.

If we accept literally what the most thorough-going absolutists say about the Absolute, we should conceive it as a perfect neutrum, the undifferentiated substrate of all determinate existence. But the only recommendation of such a view is that it enables us to view the universe as the manifestation of a single principle: except for this a neutral

Absolute is an utterly vapid conception. To become attractive it must lose its impartiality and be tinged predominantly with some special element of our experience. To Hegel in his revolt against the Schellingian 'night in which all cows are black,' the element of thought appeared supremely important: in his Absolute all non-intellectual elements are, not so much combined with Thought, as swallowed up in Thought: feeling and volition have no proper place there. Schopenhauer's Absolute is predominantly Will. Mr. F. H. Bradley, in reaction from Hegel's intellectualism, lays most stress on Feeling; in illustrating the nature of the Absolute he refers most frequently to the immediacy of sentience and the self-abandonment of strong emotional experience.

§ 2. Though the Hegelian absolutism has had many able adherents among Oxford thinkers, it is now quite eclipsed by Mr. Bradley's. As a rule my criticisms will hold good only of the theory which he advocates; though on some points what I have to say applies to absolutism in every form.

We understand Mr. Bradley best, I think, by regarding his metaphysic as a reaction against Hegel's. According to Hegel the universe is a process of thought throughout; first, thought by itself in its primal unity; secondly, thought in alienation from itself as nature; thirdly, thought returned back into itself from its alienation enriched and enhanced in the form of spirit. The highest category of spirit, he tells us, the crown and con-

summation of the whole long process, is philosophy — emphatically a thought-category. The following paragraph, the last of the *Encyclopedia*, represents faithfully the panlogistic tone of the whole work :

"The third [and last] syllogism is the Idea of philosophy, which has self-knowing reason, the absolutely-universal, for its middle term : a middle, which divides itself into Mind and Nature, making the former its presupposition, as process of the Idea's subjective activity, and the latter its universal extreme, as process of the objectively and implicitly existing Idea. The self-judging of the Idea into its two appearances characterises both as its (the self-knowing reason's) manifestations : and in it there is a unification of the two aspects : it is the nature of the fact, the notion, which causes the movement and development, yet this same movement is equally the action of cognition. The eternal Idea, in full fruition of its essence, eternally sets itself to work, engenders and enjoys itself as absolute Mind" (*P.M.* p. 197).

It is the action of cognition (*Thätigkeit des Erkennens*), according to Hegel, that makes the universe what it is throughout : according to Mr. Bradley such a doctrine misses out essential features of reality.

§ 3. As elements of reality that cannot be identified with thought, Mr. Bradley mentions in various places Feeling and Volition (*e.g.* *A.R.* p. 182). But it is plain from the tenour of the whole book that he takes much more account of feeling than of volition : the latter he is wont to reduce to a form of thought by explaining it as the self-realisation of an idea. Nor is there any sufficient evidence in any of Mr. Bradley's writings that

he appreciates either on the intellectual or the moral side the really characteristic features of volitional experience. For feeling, on the other hand, he has plainly a very strong appreciation: to reduce it to thought is not merely impossible but intolerable to him. Here is a characteristic passage of protest:

"Let us suppose the impossible accomplished; let us imagine a harmonious system of ideal contents united by relations, and reflecting itself in self-conscious harmony. This is to be reality, all reality; and there is nothing outside it. The delights and pains of the flesh, the agonies and raptures of the soul, these are fragmentary meteors fallen from thought's harmonious system. But these burning experiences—how in any sense can they be mere pieces of thought's heaven? For, if the fall is real, there is a world outside thought's region, and, if the fall is apparent, then human error itself is not included there. Heaven, in brief, must either not be heaven, or else not all reality. Without a metaphor, feeling belongs to perfect thought, or it does not. If it does not, there is at once a side of existence beyond thought. But if it does belong, then thought is different from thought discursive and relational. To make it include immediate experience, its character must be transformed. It must cease to predicate, it must get beyond mere relations, it must reach something other than truth. Thought, in a word, must have been absorbed into a higher intuition" (*A.R.* pp. 170 sq.).

If Mr. Bradley cared to express this matter in baldly logical terms, he would say, I think, (a) that feeling is so precious to us that we cannot bear to think it wanting in the Absolute; and (b) that feeling is so precious in itself that the Absolute cannot do without it. The former proposition is

implied in passages of *Appearance and Reality* too numerous to mention; the latter which is of less familiar import seems to be the upshot of such a passage as the following :

"The Absolute does not want, I presume, to make eyes at itself in a mirror, or, like a squirrel in a cage, to revolve the circle of its perfections.<sup>1</sup> Such processes must be dissolved in something not poorer but richer than themselves. And feeling and will must also be transmuted in this whole, into which thought has entered. Such a state would possess in a superior form that immediacy which we find (more or less) in feeling; and in this whole all divisions would be healed up. It would be experience entire, containing all elements in harmony. Thought would be present in a higher intuition; will would be there where the ideal had become reality; and beauty and pleasure and feeling would live on in this total fulfilment. Every flame of passion, chaste or carnal, would still burn in the Absolute unquenched and unabridged, a note absorbed in the harmony of its higher bliss" (*A.R.* p. 172).

§ 4. Such considerations, and others, perhaps, which it is hardly profitable or possible to disentangle, have determined Mr. Bradley, not merely to include feeling in the Absolute, but also to conceive the Absolute under the form of feeling. This is what Mr. Bradley means by 'thought being absorbed in a higher intuition.' The "higher intuition" is not feeling as we know it, but it has the immediacy of feeling. The doctrine is repeated in many passages of *Appearance and Reality* of which two examples will suffice. The

<sup>1</sup> I take this to be a well-merited jibe at the 'self-engendering, self-enjoying' of Hegel's absolute Mind.



first puts the matter shortly. "Feeling supplies us with a positive idea of non-relational unity. The idea is imperfect, but is sufficient to serve as a positive basis" (*A.R.* p. 530). We learn elsewhere that the "idea is imperfect," because, whereas mere feeling is below distinctions, the Absolute is above them. The second passage is fuller:

"The Reality . . . must be One, not as excluding diversity, but as somehow including it in such a way as to transform its character. There is plainly not anything which can fall outside of the Real. . . . This Absolute is experience, because that is really what we mean when we predicate or speak of anything. It is not one-sided experience, as mere volition or mere thought; but it is a whole superior to and embracing all incomplete forms of life. The whole must be immediate like feeling, but not, like feeling, immediate at a level below distinction and relation. The Absolute is immediate as holding and transcending these differences" (*A.R.* pp. 241 *sq.*).

The Absolute in short is an immediate, non-relational, divisionless, distinctionless, all-inclusive, unitary experience, of which feeling gives us an adumbration. Thus there are two main points in Feeling-Absolutism. Firstly, it asserts the Absolute to be more real and more certainly known than the Person; secondly, it conceives the Absolute under the form of Feeling.

What I think of the general assertion of the Absolute's priority to the human person the reader is sufficiently aware (cf. *supra*, chap. iii. § 4). But, if we are to choose among absolutisms, there is a good deal to be said for Mr. Bradley's. Its merit is that it *does* include the feeling-element—a tang of



devilry, a fling of fury and disgust, a passionate deviation from the just line of beauty and truth, in short, the flesh. Mr. Bradley is quite right in throwing Hegel over: the Hegelian universe is a wretchedly tiresome, bloodless affair. Hegel ("purest exemplar of inner and outer Prosa"), saw no value in sensation and emotion; and philosophers (always a little behind the world) are now generally agreed that a fair place must be found for both in any synthesis that will satisfy our nature.

§ 5. But in conceiving his Absolute under the form of feeling, Mr. Bradley has set himself at a fatal disadvantage as compared with Hegel. To put it plainly, the Bradleian Absolute is irrational, we must even say anti-rational. I know that Mr. Bradley would protest that it is super-rational; but protestation is vain in scientific argument. We know one form of reason, and one only, the human. If Mr. Bradley had taken the line of certain theologians and maintained simply that the Absolute's reason is diverse from man's, he would have made it non-rational; he would have posited a mere negation or privation. But he has gone beyond this; he has deliberately selected the least rational element of human experience and told us that it typifies the mind of the Absolute. This changes the privative into the contrary: instead of merely non-rational he makes the Absolute anti-rational.

Thus it is not strange that the dialectical chapters of the first book of *Appearance and Reality* have a

merely negative or destructive result: they contribute nothing to the intelligibility of the Absolute. Here again Mr. Bradley contrasts unfavourably with Hegel, who, beginning with the more abstract elements of experience professes to make them, by disclosing their inner contradictions, develop continuously till they lead up to the perfection of the Absolute. With Mr. Bradley, on the other hand, there is no development; the principle of self-opposition or negativity is in his hands an instrument not of explanation but of destruction. He takes up every element of the world, abstract or concrete, proves that it is riddled and ruined with self-contradictions; and yet asserts that it ultimately comes to rest, *we know not how*, in the Absolute. Thus, whereas Hegel's Absolute is rendered, or meant to be rendered, supremely intelligible by virtue of its absorption of the finite, Mr. Bradley's Absolute is rendered the more unintelligible the more it absorbs: there can be no continuity between the finite and the Bradleian Infinite. Most significant is the favourite metaphor which Mr. Bradley chooses to express the *salto mortale* whereby the finite passes into infinity; it is "suicide" (*A.R.* pp. 170, 207, 361). The Absolute is a Mettus Curtius abyss into which appearances successively jump and disappear.

§ 6. The same point may be illustrated by comparing Mr. Bradley's Absolute with Hegel's as a basis for explaining and classifying 'appearances.' Though no sort of Absolute is a good principle of

explanation, a panlogist Absolute is less bad than a sensuous one. Arranging things according to their degree of rationality gives some sort of classification, as in Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion*, which has at least the merit of an early attempt to systematise a vast and difficult field of knowledge. The doctrine of Degrees of Truth and Reality, which is indispensable to give absolutism any scientific utility, is not out of place in Hegel. But the case is very different with Mr. Bradley: a Feeling-Absolute affords no possibility of classification. While the One Real, the Infinite Whole, has non-relational immediacy, every piece of finite existence is subject to the relational form and is therefore condemned as self-contradictory. And when this is said, what more is left to say? It is true that Mr. Bradley does adopt from Hegel the doctrine of Degrees of Truth and Reality; but, as I hope to show later (chap. ix. § 38), he has no right to it. Moreover, he does not and cannot make the slightest use of it.

"To survey the field of appearances, to measure each by the idea of perfect individuality, and to arrange them in an order and in a system of reality and merit would be the task of metaphysics" (*A.R.* p. 489).

Very true: but it is a task the metaphysician will never accomplish so long as the Feeling-Absolute is the standard of perfect individuality.

§ 7. All this has prepared us to understand the scepticism which pervades *Appearance and Reality*, from the destructive criticism of "Appearance" at the beginning to the chapter of "Ultimate Doubts"

at its close: the Feeling-Absolutism to which Mr. Bradley has committed himself is an idolon that precludes all systematic explanation. We should note, too, that Mr. Bradley's scepticism is of a peculiarly hopeless and incurable type: the common sceptic argues that nothing is to be trusted because everything is irrational; but, according to Mr. Bradley, everything is to be distrusted just so far as it is rational. His argument is that the very essence of thought consists in what he calls the separation of content from existence, that is, in a diremption of the immediacy which characterises the One Reality. No truth, therefore, is quite true; if truth were quite true it would cease to be truth (*A.R.* chap. xv. *passim*). Now though scepticism is not altogether bad, and some forms of scepticism are justifiable and useful, I hold that such a scepticism would by itself condemn the *Weltanschauung* which necessitates it. It has nothing in common with the negative doubt that finds philosophy unconvincing, but confesses itself impotent to suggest an explanation of its own. Mr. Bradley's is a positive scepticism that denies truth everywhere, a reasoned conviction that all reasoning must be false. So positive is it that some of the closest students of Mr. Bradley's work are left uncertain how he manages to find room for the constructive elements of his philosophical position.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Such appears to be the view of Mr. L. T. Hobhouse when he writes of *Appearance and Reality*, "While every one admits the force of the negative dialectics, such constructive conceptions as remain seem scarcely at home" (*Theory of Knowledge*, p. viii.).

§ 8. I propose now to illustrate the impracticability and anti-scientific tendency of feeling-absolutism by a survey of the various branches of philosophy.

We come at once to the root of the matter in Mr. Bradley's treatment of such ontological conceptions as substance and attribute, quality and relation, space and time. The decisive passages are contained in the chapters of *Appearance and Reality* on "Substantive and Adjective" and on "Relation and Quality": the principles there enunciated serve him with no substantial modification throughout. His method is to test these conceptions by reference to the perfect experience which is the One Reality. A perfect experience is one which is immediate and non-relational without the defects of the immediate experiences we actually have: it is a block-experience like pure sensation and strong emotion, but raised to a higher plane by including the higher elements which human sensation and emotion do not possess. This may seem a vague account of an experience which is to serve as criterion for the most solidly-founded facts of our life; but nothing exacter can be had. Mr. Bradley's perfect experience, as something not to be found *in rerum natura*, can only be described by somewhat distant analogies. Now, whatever else such a block-experience may be and do, it clearly excludes the form of relation. All the ontological conceptions which he reviews involve relation; therefore they are radically unsound. Such is Mr. Bradley's short way with ontology.

§ 9. If, as Mr. Bradley holds, the One Reality which is perfect excludes relation, it follows that relational experience must be imperfect. The really vital point of Mr. Bradley's condemnation of current ontological conceptions is his attack on the relational form. If he proves his contention that qualities are unintelligible either *with* relations or *without* them, then his sceptical position is established. But if, as I believe, his attack is quite ineffective, his other doubts and difficulties can count for little.

It is surprising, when Mr. Bradley's arguments on this head are reduced to their simplest form, into how small a compass they go. They are reducible to two. The first is that, because quality and relation depend each upon the other, they are therefore self-contradictory. Now such an argument hardly deserves serious consideration,<sup>1</sup> though Mr. Bradley puts it in the forefront and lays great stress upon it. It is the commonest fact of experience that two objects, neither of which can stand alone, stand well enough when one supports the other: there is no self-contradiction in the mutual support whereby two playing-cards are made to stand upon a table. The other argument is that two terms A and B cannot be conceived as connected by a relation R, because in that case you need other relations  $R_1$  and  $R_2$  to connect R to A and to B, and so *ad infinitum*. But this has plausibility only if we take the most

<sup>1</sup> Such has, however, been accorded it by Prof. Stout in his "Alleged Self Contradictions in the Concept of Relation; a criticism of Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*, pt. i. ch. iii," in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, N.S. vol. ii.



crassly material view of relation and term, and think of them as substances independent of consciousness, in the way that common people think of bread and cheese. From that anti-philosophical point of view it certainly is rather hard to imagine how term combines with relation, how cheese sticks to bread, without an infinity of intercalated links. Get rid, however, of crude materialistic prejudice, and the difficulty ceases to exist. In our personal experience, which I hold to be the norm of reality, we always have unity-with-diversity (Mr. Bradley's great desideratum) made up of terms combined with relations. 'Relation' corresponds to what Prof. James calls the transitive aspect of mind, and 'term' to the substantive. In actual personal experience we never have purely transitive or purely substantive states, but always a combination of the two; and that is the fundamental reason why term and relation are inseparable. From this primary mode of existence of relations and terms we may advance to their existence in the objective world. To conceive their existence outside our minds should be no difficulty to those who, like Mr. Bradley, regard reality as experience: relation will be the transitive, term the substantive aspect of the One Real Experience. We shall see later (§ 17) that the relational form is an essential feature of personality, and that our judgment upon its validity depends upon the degree to which we accept the reality and validity of personal experience.

§ 10. Armed with his fundamental doctrine of

the viciousness of the relational form, Mr. Bradley makes short work of our ontological conceptions. Any one who adopts his just-stated conclusions "will have seen that our experience, where relational, is not true; and he will have condemned, almost without a hearing, the great mass of phenomena" (*A.R.* p. 34). It will be enough to show how he deals with Space (*A.R.* chap. iv.). The problem of space, says Mr. Bradley, is merely "a peculiar form of the problem" of Relation and Quality. "Space is a relation—which it cannot be; and it is a quality or substance—which again it cannot be" (p. 36). The relational form is vicious, and yet space cannot do without it: being indissolubly bound up with the relational form space must share its condemnation. Such is Mr. Bradley's position. The argument by which he reaches it is a little obscured by the extremely antithetical form of his statement, but what it comes to is this. If you view space *internally* it breaks up, subdivide it as you will, into parts joined by relations: we never come upon a solid piece of space. But we cannot say that space is a mere relation; otherwise we should have the absurdity that a relation between two spaces would be a relation between two relations. In our conception of space, solid space is an element, and relation is an element; and yet each element eludes us when we try to lay hand on it. Again, when space is viewed *externally*, a similar difficulty arises. "When taken itself as a unit, it passes away into the search for an illusory whole" (p. 37). In other words, you



can never imagine yourself on the outside of space ; you can never see it as self-contained : let it be as vast as you will, it is always related to some space beyond it. Once again it is never a solid piece ; and yet it is always more than a relation.

Exactly the same line of attack is taken against Time ; and in both cases we feel that Mr. Bradley's argument might have been made much shorter. He has only got to prove that space and time must be conceived relationally, that is, that they are not capable of being presented in an immediate indivisible block-experience such as he will recognise as alone fully real ; and then they are swept away in the general condemnation of the relational form. And with this shorter argument the grounds of condemnation would have become more manifest. Space and time are thought-entities, rather than feeling-entities : their defect, on Mr. Bradley's view, is just that they are made and used by human intelligence.

§ 11. From this defence of Time and Space against Mr. Bradley, a defence that might easily be adapted so as to apply to other conceptions of like nature, it should not be inferred that I wish to affirm their ultimate validity and to argue that they hold good absolutely. The obvious fact is that they are human conceptions, relative to human faculties and purposes, and not valid beyond them. An absolute consciousness has doubtless its appropriate categories or cosmological conceptions ; but we cannot tell what they are, except that they must be different from ours. Our conception of

Time, for example, is evidently inappropriate to an Absolute Being; we cannot imagine him as beginning or ending, or as continually in change or continually at rest, or as alternating between change and rest. But this is no slur on Time as a human conception. And, just as we answer Mr. Bradley, we should answer the antinomies of Kant. We should concede to Kant that we cannot imagine time either ending or going on for ever; that we cannot imagine ourselves either dividing time infinitely, or coming upon an atom of time: but then no human being wants, or ever will want, either to get to the end of time, or to divide it into infinitely small parts. The conception of time is adequate for everything that we want to do with it. Mr. Bradley himself writes, and cannot help writing, in terms of these common cosmological conceptions in every line of his book; and by so doing tacitly admits their practical sufficiency.

§ 12. The absolutist's scepticism about the conceptions just dealt with is a trifle compared with his sceptical treatment of a conception that may be counted either as cosmological or as psychological, the conception of Personality. Though personality is much more than indispensable to practical conduct, it is at least that. It might indeed be argued that the conception is nothing original, but a product of comparatively late and artificial conditions; for it is a commonplace of historians that it was much less definitely held in the ancient world than in the modern, and that it was strengthened by the sense

of responsibility fostered by Roman law and personal religion. But, on the other hand, though personality is in one sense a product of progress, we should be entitled to argue that it is also a cause, and that the growth of the conception has been a most powerful civilising agency. Certain it is that personality now has become a necessary of life; and that, were it seriously weakened, civilised society, even as an economic structure, would fall to pieces.

§ 13. But, of course, personality is a great deal more than this. It is the best element in our experience in the sense that a good human person is the best thing we know, and that the qualities which make him good belong essentially to what we call his personality. As the supremely valuable it acts as our main standard of valuation. I cannot illustrate this better than from my friends the enemy. All through Mr. Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* and Prof. Bosanquet's *Logic* we find individuality used as a term appropriate to what is higher: reality is "individual" (e.g. *A.R.* p. 149), truth is "individual" (e.g. *Logic*, i. p. 3). But what does anybody know of individuality apart from his acquaintance with it in human individuals? Moreover, not merely is personality the standard of value which we commonly use; the human person is also the source of authority in all valuation. Analyse valuation to its ultimate terms and we see that, in the last resort, it is what Bentham disliked so much, 'ipsedixitism': we cannot appeal to any external authority to override the personal affir-

mation. I have tried to prove this in regard to art,<sup>1</sup> and it is no less true of morality and knowledge. Liberty of conscience, right of private judgment, and justification by faith are simply expressions of the same principle in another field. Mr. Bradley himself, with his fine heretical instinct, is often more than half upon the same side. But all this goes by the board before the absolutist's denunciation. Personality and its individual separateness is to him the veil of Maya, *das radical Böse*, the source of evil and illusion.

§ 14. When he comes to specific criticism the absolutist's injustice to personality naturally takes the form of denying its separateness from the impersonal environment. We find this, where we emphatically ought not to find it, in Prof. Bosanquet. But the fact is that Prof. Bosanquet, though he never professes acceptance of the Absolute, and indeed often uses expressions which preclude the Absolute, drops frequently into Hegelian phraseology and allows himself to be dominated by Hegelian prejudice. Certain expressions in his *Psychology of the Moral Self* (pp. 9 sq.) show the anti-personal bias very plainly. He compares the soul to a crystal forming in a solution according to the chemical "affinities and cohesions" of its material. Now our reluctance to accept a physical analogy of this kind is not to be got over by sneering at it as a piece of selfish exclusiveness, as an attempt "to keep a little mystic shrine within

<sup>1</sup> See "Art and Personality" (§§ 28 sq.) in *Personal Idealism*.

the individual soul, which may be sacred from intrusion and different from everything else," or as "a little trick" "to get a last refuge for freedom by shutting out the universe." It is a statement of plainest fact to say that a soul is more separate from its environment than a crystal from its solution. And the judgments of value, which are connected with the self, and are not connected with the crystal, are not to be dismissed as mere sentimentality. But Prof. Bosanquet ignores them and makes a merit of it: he claims that "it has always been the most spiritual philosophy that has been most audacious in simply taking the soul as an operation or appearance within the universe, incapable of being cut off from other operations and appearances." "There is," he continues, "nothing to be afraid of in finding that the operative content, the actual being, of the soul comes from the environment." But in this levelling audacity Prof. Bosanquet is just illustrating the old truth that an exaggerated spiritual monism is but a step from materialism. Prof. Haeckel calls himself a monist too, and will have it that the moneron has arisen by "spontaneous generation from inorganic nitro-carbonates" (*Riddle of the Universe*, p. 377), and that there is no break in the upward development from the moneron to man. He would endorse every word of my quotations from Prof. Bosanquet with the merely verbal alteration of 'material' for 'spiritual.'

§ 15. Mr. Bradley could hardly adopt the

position that the "operative content of the soul comes from the environment," because it would seem that in his view finite souls are really the only spiritualities in that environment. His Absolute is not, like the *Urgrund* of Jacob Behmen, an all-supporting spiritual existence out of which personalities rise momentarily as waves upon the sea: it is probably in the end nothing but the aggregate of finite souls.<sup>1</sup> His method is rather to confuse the boundaries of the self, and he argues that, take the self in any sense you will, you cannot show how it is demarcated from the not-self. But this argument must be met by the consideration adduced already in reference to time and space, that he is subjecting the conception to tests it was never meant to bear. Many of Mr. Bradley's 'aporiai' would disappear, I believe, on careful scrutiny; but, even if we granted that they all held good, we should be none the worse. The work that the conception of selfhood does for us does not require that it should have sharply defined edges. We know that a volitional decision is closer to the self than a tooth-ache, a tooth-ache than an aching tooth, and the aching tooth than the drug which soothes it. But it is not important to determine exactly how far, if at all, each of these is part of the self. And, in any case, I do not see how exactitude in the matter is attainable without some sense-organ that men do not possess. We enjoy exactitude in matters only that come under the

<sup>1</sup> On this difficult point in Mr. Bradley's metaphysic, see *infra*, chap. ix. § 41.



scrutiny of our exact senses; but to perceive the soul we have no sense-organ at all. And indeed Mr. Bradley's argument that definite boundary is essential to reality might be turned against many things beside the human soul. If it is valid, what is there that is real? In nature certainly no definite boundaries can be perceived, and the more exact and powerful our scientific instruments become, the more blurred do the edges of things appear. All minute scientific observation is approximate within a limit of error, and is taken by the method of averages with a mean variation.<sup>1</sup> Nothing is absolutely precise except abstractions such as those of the mathematical sciences.

§ 16. And, as abstractions alone are perfectly precise, so abstractions alone are perfectly unchanging. It is a commonplace of Absolutism to contrast the motionless perfection of the great Totum Simul with the mutability of phenomena. Thus it is quite in order that Mr. Bradley should support his attack upon the self by pointing to its mutability. But why should it not be mutable? The self becomes none the less real by changing, provided that it do not change too fast. A self that was extremely mutable would certainly cease to deserve the name of self, because it could no longer perform the functions of a self. But why should it be absolutely fixed? One of Mr. Bradley's arguments is that "if you take an essence which

<sup>1</sup> For a good example see Prof. E. W. Scripture on the measurement of the diameter of a coin (*New Psychology*, pp. 43-44).

can change, it is not an essence at all" (*A.R.* p. 80). But this has quite a medieval ring. Unless we propose to rehabilitate some form of scholastic realism, why should essence be essentially immutable? The essence of a thing may be defined as those elements of it which are most important from the view-point of some purpose or function. Thus the essence of a thing may alter either from inward change, or from change of purpose or function. Various *obiter dicta* of Mr. Bradley suggest that he would not object very seriously to this definition. But, if so, the self shares the quality of mutability with everything else in the world. Neither from its mutability nor from its indefiniteness of boundary is Mr. Bradley entitled to argue that the self is appearance and not reality.

§ 17. But, after all, these matters of indefinite boundary and mutability are but subordinate counts in Mr. Bradley's indictment. His "mortal objection" to the self is that it exhibits once more "the old puzzle as to the connection of diversity with unity" (*A.R.* p. 103), in other words, that it is subject to the relational form. This it shares with every form of appearance; for "reality, as it commonly appears, contains terms and relations, and indeed may be said to consist in these mainly" (*A.R.* p. 107). In terming this a 'mortal objection,' Mr. Bradley is quite right from his own point of view. The relational form is a fundamental and essential characteristic of personality: deny its validity and you deal a mortal stroke at the validity



and reality of personal experience. And Mr. Bradley is right from my point of view in extending the application of the relational form to every kind of "reality as it commonly appears." A personal idealist must hold an anthropomorphic cosmology: he must treat the relational form as valid of the real world just because it is essential to personal experience. A philosopher who finds fault with the existence of the relational form *in rerum natura* is judging by a standard of intelligibility which is other than the personal.

The question of the validity of the relational form is therefore identical with the question what is to be our standard of reality and intelligibility. Is it to be personal experience, or is it to be some other principle, such as the Feeling-Absolute? Mr. Bradley would admit that personality has strong *prima facie* claims. "The self," he confesses, "is no doubt the highest form of experience which we have" (*A.R.* p. 119). Then why ask for anything higher? Volition, which I hold to be the most characteristic function of personality, gives us, according to Mr. Bradley, an "intense feeling of reality" (*A.R.* p. 115). Then why not accept it as truly real? Because, answers Mr. Bradley, "it is with you as with the man who, transported by his passion, feels and knows that only love gives the secret of the universe" (*A.R.* p. 115 *sq.*). But I reply that the cases are not parallel. We learn to distrust the love-transport because on cool consideration the conviction that we know the great

secret passes away ; there are things that the erotic revelation does not explain, cool consideration for one of them. The principle of personality, on the other hand, does not evaporate in disillusion ; it does explain, if not everything, at least the most important part of most things and the most important things. No it does not, rejoins Mr. Bradley ; it does not show us *how* "to understand diversity in unity" (*A.R.* p. 112). I reply that it does, so long as you do not ask to be 'shown how' in the most coarsely material manner ; so long as you do not think of mental contents as separate like marbles and ask to be shown by what links they can be joined into a unity. That central puzzle of terms and relations, unity-with-diversity, the One and the Many, which worries you to death, is all the time being solved within your own breast : *solvitur cogitando* is the answer to Mr. Bradley's apparently multiplex but really simple difficulty. If this is so, we can meet several of Mr. Bradley's heaviest charges with a direct negative. "The self-apprehension of the self as one and many" is "at last the full answer to our whole series of riddles" (*A.R.* p. 108) ; "in this intuition" you *do* "possess a diversity without discrepancy" (*ibid.*) ; and it is a *valid* "claim on the part of the self, not only to maintain and to justify its own proper being, but, in addition, to rescue things from the condemnation" which Mr. Bradley has passed upon them (*A.R.* p. 103). The Self is the standard of intelligibility ; and, when

Mr. Bradley looks elsewhere, we may say, using his own quotation from Strauss, that "he partly does not know what he wants, and partly does not want what he knows."

To all this there is the obvious answer that I have been indulging in sheer assertion, and that I have never proved my master principle. Well, I freely admit it. I hold that such a principle must in the first instance be taken on trust: a standard of reality and intelligibility cannot be established by the ordinary mediate processes of proof; it can only justify itself by success in explaining the world. For the effective establishment of the principle of personality we need a whole system of philosophy, which, needless to say, has not yet been written. Such a system, were it completed, would prove that the principle of personality can explain. But meanwhile there is the preliminary task of proving that the rival principle of feeling-absolutism fails in explanation: to this I address myself in the following sections and in a later chapter devoted to detailed examination of Mr. Bradley's work.

§ 18. To show how little Feeling-Absolutism avails for explanation we must pass the various philosophical disciplines in quick review and estimate what it has done in each. The task of criticism is rendered monotonous by the uniformly negative character of the achievement. It is indeed hard to see how anything positive could be hoped

for: when once the partial is condemned for its partialness, but declared to be somehow absorbable in the Absolute, there is nothing more to be added about it except a course of variously flavoured negations.

Some of the negations which bear on psychology we have made acquaintance with in the preceding discussion of the Self. But in any positive psychological interpretation Mr. Bradley takes up very different ground. Recognising, as it would appear, the impossibility of getting a psychology from the view-point of the Absolute he advocates the method of "Phenomenalism" (which is not easy to distinguish from common-sense), and argues convincingly against those who want to have "no division at all between psychology and metaphysics" ("Defence of Phenomenalism in Psychology" in *Mind*, N.S. No. 33, p. 26). Treating psychology in this 'phenomenalist' way, Mr. Bradley makes free use of concepts previously riddled with contradictions. We find an example in the very central position of all his psychology, the formula indeed into which his whole psychological doctrine might be condensed, "Volition is the self-realisation of an idea" ("On Active Attention" in *Mind*, N.S., No. 41, p. 27 *et saepe al.*). It must seem strange that so riddled and crazy a concept as *self* should be usable as the very pivot of all psychology; though Mr. Bradley might defend its use by his great distinction between what is true and what works; or, in other words, between meta-

physical or ultimate truth and scientific or half-truth which is obtained by "legitimate fictions" and "convenient falsehood," and consists of "explanations that truly explain" but are not "true explanations" ("Defence of Phenomenalism," pp. 30, 32, 35). However, legitimately or illegitimately, Mr. Bradley does get forward; and thus provokes us to ask why the standpoint of phenomenalism should not prevail yet more widely, and why the process of metaphysical adjustment, which is to result in ultimate truth as the absolutist understands it, should not in all cases be postponed till the Greek Kalends.

§ 19. Just because the fundamental position of the feeling-absolutist is the rejection of the general form of thought, it is upon Knowledge that the brunt of his scepticism falls. Mr. Bradley has made no small contribution to the theory of knowledge; but it was done at a time before his later metaphysical views had gained complete possession of his mind (cf. *P.L.* p. vii.). In *Appearance and Reality* the discussions that touch upon knowledge generally take the form of attacks upon its validity: knowledge is indicted both for its partialness and for what Mr. Bradley calls its separation of content from existence. Into both lines of attack he throws himself with energy: if it be true that he has reached his present position by a recoil from Hegel, it is not strange that he should be specially severe upon the more distinctively intellectual side of our experience.

The first of these lines of attack is appropriate to Absolutism in every form: he who holds that the Absolute alone is real is committed to the position that every human judgment is partial and so far false. No judgment can include everything; and the mere fact of leaving anything outside its scope may be regarded as fatal to its truth. "Every truth, because incomplete, is more or less erroneous" (*A.R.* p. 536). This doctrine of the Conditionality of Truth, which is set in a foremost place in *Appearance and Reality* and may be found substantially in the *Principles of Logic*, goes with the general tendency to discredit personal experience: if certainty belongs to any item of our personal experience, then the claim of the Absolute to override personality disappears. But the plausibility of the doctrine is due to a confusion between the conditionedness and the conditionality of a judgment. If a man stands close to a large fire for some time, he will judge that he has a certain feeling to which he will probably give the term 'hot.' Such a judgment stands in an infinite complex of conditions. The man, the subject of the judgment, is conditioned by all the environment that makes any difference to him, and it is hard to say what part of the environment makes no difference: he would not exist, nor would the fire exist, without the world they stand in. Thus the judgment, like every other, is conditioned, simply because its content is a piece of the world. Nevertheless, it is quite unconditional; there is no hypothetical element in



it. Its verbal expression may be ambiguous ; but as it is formed in the judger's mind it is categorical and certain. It is the expression of an unquestionable immediate experience ; its circumstant conditions make no difference to its truth. Whether a judgment is conditional can only be settled by examination in each case : but it is only the exigencies of a metaphysical theory that can make us refuse to recognise the unconditionality of that vast mass of judgments on which is based our general knowledge of the world.

§ 20. The other line of attack upon knowledge, that it involves a separation of content from existence, is on rather a different footing ; it belongs to Feeling - Absolutism alone, perhaps only to Mr. Bradley's version of it. Expressed in simplest terms it comes to no more than the old difficulty about the relational form : in Mr. Bradley's terminology a non-relational block-experience unites content with existence, while a relational experience separates them. If my previous vindication of the relational form is sound, there is no need to defend knowledge on this score. Two remarks only may be added. The first relates to Mr. Bradley's psychological history of the matter, which runs as follows. In the beginning, as one may say, below the level of thought content and existence are one, that is, consciousness is sub-relational ; when thought arises, it causes a "diremption of feeling's unity" and consciousness becomes relational (*A.R.* p. 460) ; at a higher stage the diremption is healed,

so that content and existence are reunited with the higher elements somehow preserved in the fusion, and consciousness becomes super-relational (*ibid.*). Now of these three stages the first two only have any claim to be historical: the consciousness of the oyster is, or is supposed to be, sub-relational; the human consciousness is relational; the third or super-relational stage is a mere dream. And this leads on to my second remark, which deals with the same point more with reference to terminology. Terminology is always a matter of secondary importance, so long as the meaning is clear: and it is quite clear what the stages are that Mr. Bradley means to refer to in what he says of the 'union of content with existence.' All the same I must beg leave to point out that this terminology is not justified by correspondence with anything that actually happens. Of super-personality no one, of course, knows anything. Of pure sensation we have no direct knowledge: but in mental states that approach it, such as the spasm of tooth-extraction, what happens is that we simply feel and don't think; on such occasions we are not, more than at any other time, uniting content with existence. The philosopher at his best unites content with existence just as much or just as little as the oyster or the Absolute. 'Uniting content with existence' is a purely fanciful term for the sub-relational stage of consciousness; Mr. Bradley could just as well have called it 'abracadabrant' or 'runcible,' or any other word that Edward Lear and Lewis Carroll



might suggest. His history of the primal union, subsequent diremption and final redintegration of content with existence, if taken literally, is nothing but a fairy-tale.<sup>1</sup>

In Mr. Bradley's presentation his two lines of attack upon knowledge tend to blend into one. "The whole of finite being and knowledge consists vitally . . . in the alienation of the two aspects of existence and content" (*A.R.*, pp. 448, cf. 455 *sq.*). In Mr. Bradley's phrase, finitude involves ideality (cf. *A.R.*, index *s.v.* "finite, ideality of"); and every act of knowledge, inasmuch as it is partial and finite, must also be 'ideal.'

§ 21. An awkward result of Mr. Bradley's doctrine of the inevitable falsity of truth is that he is left with no means of distinguishing it from error. Everything that Mr. Bradley says about error in his chapter in *Appearance and Reality* (chap. xvi.), must be said on his own principles about truth. Turning over the pages of that chapter we find the following statements: "Error is the same as false appearance or . . . it is at any rate one kind of false appearance" (p. 187); "error . . . is content made loose from its own reality, and related to a reality with which it is discrepant" (p. 188); "error . . . is self-contradictory" (*ibid.*); "error *is* truth, it is partial truth" (p. 192); "the point of error . . .

<sup>1</sup> It is remarkable what a mythological tone Mr. Bradley's psychology occasionally takes. In his account of Activity mental contents expand themselves, contract themselves, transcend limits, oscillate, waver and struggle with each other in the dim chambers of the mind, conquer and are defeated, till we are reminded of the ghostly battles of the jins in the *Arabian Nights*. See especially *A.R.* pp. 96 *sqq.*

lies in . . . insistence on the partial and discrepant" (p. 194); "the one-sided emphasis of error . . . will contribute, we know not how, to the harmony of the Absolute" (p. 195); "error is truth which it is supplemented" (*ibid.*). Now we have learned Mr. Bradley's lesson to very little purpose if we do not see that his principles compel us to say all these things about truth. Every true statement, because partial, is, to some extent, false appearance or one kind of false appearance; is content made loose from its own reality; is discrepant with reality; is in some degree self-contradictory; is partial error; insists on the partial and discrepant; is one-sided; needs supplementation and yet contributes, we know not how, to the harmony of the Absolute. The quotations I have made are but representative selections from a much greater stock which Mr. Bradley offers. But, let him multiply definition and exhaust ingenuity as he will, he can do no more than assure us that truth and error differ in degree, he can never tell us how to measure the degree. Here are two statements: 'one and one are two,' 'one and one are three.' On feeling-absolutist principles we are justified in saying no more than that both are partially true and also partially false; that both need rearrangement to make them harmonise with reality; and that, if we could view them both "from the Absolute's point of view" (*A.R.* p. 184), we should know which was the truer; but that if we got to that point of view we ourselves "would have been transmuted and

destroyed" (*ibid.*) and thought itself would have committed suicide (*A.R.* pp. 170, 361).

§ 22. Of course no one can sit down with such an impotent conclusion; we must have *some* criterion to work with. Mr. Bradley would protest against the sort of efficiency-criterion that a pragmatist would advocate, but is he not paving the way for one much lower? One of the things I find hardest to accept from Mr. Bradley is his antithesis between what works and what is true. The tone in which he speaks of modern science rather reminds one of the tone in which some upper-class people are wont to speak of retail trade, as something absurd and undignified though eminently useful. For the solid results which the scientific men have to show he entertains sincere respect; but the "mere working ideas" of science he treats with contemptuous toleration as "convenient falsehoods," "necessary and legitimate fictions," "half-truths," "useful nonsense" (*A.R.* p. 451 *et al.*). On the other hand, ultimate truth, truth "from the Absolute's point of view" (*A.R.* p. 184), truth that corresponds to "the idea of perfect Reality" (*A.R.* p. 401) is treated as immeasurably superior to science, and yet is credited with nothing desirable, neither with *lux* nor with *fructus*. Now am I an alarmist in thinking that all this threatens the approach of a most insidious and dangerous fallacy? It is notorious what has happened in ethics to Dr. McTaggart and Prof. Taylor; how from the unsubstantial heights of the Absolute they have tended to

lapse to the lower categories, Dr. McTaggart in particular to a somewhat outspoken variety of hedonism. May not the same thing happen in logic? Will not the next logician of the school draw his distinction between absolute and practical truth? Will he not relegate absolute truth to a purely honorary or noumenal station, and, practically abandoning Mr. Bradley's superfine position, base effective truth on coarse utility? It may sound improbable; and yet it is quite consistent with the history of Absolutism.<sup>1</sup>

§ 23. It is in the field of Morals and Religion that absolutism cuts most sharply against convictions that plain men hold tenaciously. Though this is evident from the merest inspection of *Appearance and Reality*, it is not so universally admitted as it ought to be. One meets occasionally with naïve admirers of Mr. Bradley (admirers, surely, rather than readers) who put us out of countenance by affirming that Mr. Bradley is really orthodox at bottom, and that what he says really means something quite harmless and ordinary, as that the universe is an organic whole, or that the finite can never comprehend the infinite. For the sake of the simple-hearted, then, I will turn over one of Mr. Bradley's chapters and set down a few of the more notable passages. In his chapter on "Goodness" we read that "the ultimate truth of morality or religion" is a "common prejudice" (p. 402); that

<sup>1</sup> See Prof. Pringle Pattison's *Hegelianism and Personality*, passim.

"goodness" exhibits "a contradictory character," inasmuch as "it tends to pass beyond itself, and, if it were completed, it would forthwith cease properly to be good" (p. 409); that "goodness" has "a radical vice" (p. 414); that "goodness is a subordinate and, therefore, a self-contradictory aspect of the universe" (p. 420), that the views of "the popular moralist" are "a blind tangle of bewilderment and error" (p. 420); that "virtue is . . . a pursuit of what is inconsistent and therefore impossible" (p. 421); that certain difficulties of moral science cannot be solved till "goodness is degraded to an appearance" (p. 423); that "goodness, as such, is but an appearance which is transcended in the Absolute" (p. 429); that "considered either theoretically or practically, 'Free Will' is . . . a mere lingering chimera," which "no writer, who respects himself, can be called on any longer to treat . . . seriously" (p. 435); that the result of goodness as inner morality is that "that which professes itself moral would be the same as mere badness, if it did not differ, even for the worse, by the addition of hypocrisy" (p. 436);<sup>1</sup> that virtue "pursues the unmeaning" (p. 437); that "religion is . . . forced to maintain unreduced aspects . . . and . . . exists . . . by a kind of perpetual oscillation and compromise" (p. 440), that "an inner discrepancy . . . pervades the whole field of religion," which "we are tempted to exemplify . . . by the sexual passion," so that "its

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bradley adds at the foot of the page, "We may note here that our country, the chosen land of Moral Philosophy, has the reputation abroad of being the chief home of hypocrisy and cant."

dogmas must end in one-sided error, or else in senseless compromise" (p. 443); that, "like morality, religion is not ultimate, it is a mere appearance, and is therefore inconsistent with itself" (p. 444); that, "short of the Absolute, God cannot rest, and, having reached that goal, he is lost and religion with him" (p. 447); that "God is but an aspect, and that must mean but an appearance, of the Absolute" (p. 448), and, finally, that "the God which could exist would most assuredly be no God" (p. 449). If we traversed the remaining twenty-six chapters and appendix of Mr. Bradley's book we might gather an even more pungent anthology.

I admit that the foregoing quotations do not look so bad in their context as when they stand nakedly alone. Then again we must allow for Mr. Bradley's attitude: he is fond of saying strong things in metaphysics "with a view to astonish common sense and petrify his enemies" (*P.L.* p. 139). And to astonish common sense is quite a useful function in its place. The ethical and religious prejudices of the British middle-classes should not be treated with excessive respect: it does the smug, respectable philistine good to be shaken up roughly by Mr. Bradley's vigorous hand. But, when all allowances are made, it is plain, not merely that Mr Bradley will not harmonise with any form of orthodox moral philosophy and religion ever current in civilised Europe, but that his principles preclude him from offering any constructive account of morality and religion at all.



§ 24. The main ground of Mr. Bradley's attack upon the reality of morals is the old anti-rational one of separation of idea from existence.

"Goodness," he says, "is the verification in existence of a desired ideal content, and it thus implies the measurement of fact by a suggested idea. Hence both goodness and truth contain the separation of idea and existence, and involve a process in time. And, therefore, each is appearance, and but a one-sided aspect of the Real" (*A.R.* p. 402).

Of this whole matter I fear the reader is now heartily tired, and indeed I have nothing more to say than has been said already. We can only admit Mr. Bradley's charge that morality is an affair of human intelligence, not of feeling merely, and abide the consequences.

In all that Mr. Bradley has to allege against the full reality of moral experience this point alone has strict relevance; and this excuses me from discussing his numerous other difficulties, theoretical and practical. As helping to prove that morality is only appearance Mr. Bradley alleges that goodness is always the adjective of something not itself (*A.R.* p. 410); that goodness is desire for perfection and, when perfection is reached, desire and therefore goodness ceases (*ibid.*); that in moral goodness it is impossible to harmonise completely self-assertion and self-sacrifice and impossible to dispense with either (*A.R.* pp. 414 *sqq.*); that the morality of conscience leads to self-sufficiency and self-will (*A.R.* pp. 430 *sqq.*); that it is impossible to draw a precise boundary between moral goodness in the

proper inward sense and good things like beauty, physical strength and courage, which are more or less akin to goodness (*A.R.* p. 437); that evil is made by and is necessary to the existence of goodness, so that "morality itself, which makes evil, desires in evil to remove a condition of its own being" (*A.R.* p. 202). These difficulties have been worked out elaborately by Prof. Taylor in his *Problem of Conduct*, and a great many added ranging in seriousness from "the impossibility of ever finally removing the possibility of a deep-seated antagonism between the competing claims of fulness and harmony of individual satisfaction and social width or comprehensiveness" (p. 388), down to the ocular discomfort of pursuing philosophical studies by artificial light. All of them are declared to be solved by the Absolute, and indeed to prove that the Absolute exists to solve them; but their general effect must be decidedly depressing to any reader who is not fortified with a considerable experience of life.

It is no part of my business to unravel these sinister enigmas, which indeed rather suggest to me Mr. Bradley's own phrase, "a blind tangle of bewilderment and error:" my business lies in proving that absolutism multiplies difficulties and settles none. But I cannot help thinking that Mr. Bradley and Prof. Taylor are taking a diametrically wrong path to prove the existence of a perfect Reality. It avails nothing for their purpose to lay out all the theoretical puzzles, practical diffi-



culties, and incurable miseries of the world we live in. You cannot prove that the New Jerusalem is golden by throwing mud at your own dwelling-place. The true method seems precisely opposite: we should rather prove that the world has goodness enough to entitle us to argue for the ultimate removal of all evil.

§ 25. The denial of full reality to moral goodness, so that it can find place within the Absolute only in a transmuted form, involves the assertion that moral evil has a share of ultimate reality and is to be similarly transmuted into the Absolute, which itself is neither moral nor immoral but "super-moral" (*A.R.* p. 202). This union of contraries to form the all-inclusive perfection is a cardinal point with Mr. Bradley; truth and error, beauty and ugliness are melted together in just the same way. But no other conjunction gives us the same shock as that of morality and immorality, because the moral and the immoral are opposed in a way that truth and error, beauty and ugliness are not. Immorality in the strict sense means a bad direction of the will; and the good will is so diametrically opposed to the bad will in our personal experience that it shocks the moral sense to be told that both are to be rearranged into compatibility in the perfect Reality.

The justification which Mr. Bradley alleges for the final preservation of immorality is that bad men may subserve good ends: that "Heaven's design . . . can realise itself as effectively in 'Catiline or Borgia' as in the scrupulous or innocent" (*A.R.*

p. 202). This is hardly relevant; for a bad man viewed as an instrument, possibly an unconscious instrument, is different from a bad man viewed from the inside, so to speak, that is, with reference to the direction of his will. But Mr. Bradley's doctrine does appeal to us, I admit, on a rather different ground, the sense we have that many personal qualities and characters which the common standard condemns could hardly be suffered to disappear without leaving the world poorer. Such a quality as unsociability—surely it has a certain use in keeping the crowd at a distance and enabling, say, an artist to do work which intruders would have spoilt. Even Catiline and Borgia, and still more Benvenuto Cellini and Napoleon, possessed elements of character much more interesting than we find in commonplace, third-rate, virtuous people. I suppose the solution of the difficulty is that in such cases we must distinguish the good elements of character from the will, which was bad. In common phrase they were bad men, but had a great deal of good in them.

§ 26. Let us now see what ethical explanation Feeling-Absolutism has to offer in recompense: we shall find, I think, that its interpretative powers are slight indeed. There is one explanation which it is capable of supplying, though Mr. Bradley never puts it forward as prominently as he should, the explanation of what we may call the moral *visus*, or the impulse which urges us on to do and suffer in the sphere of morality. "Morality," says Mr.

Bradley, "is the identification of the individual's will with his own idea of perfection" (*A.R.* p. 431). But why, we ask, is perfection attractive; what makes us strive to attain it? It really is not enough to answer, "We do not know and we do not care" (*E.S.* p. 57). How much a more definite answer is needed is brought home to us by the hedonism of Prof. Taylor's more systematic work: in the *Problem of Conduct* it is the desire for pleasure that first sets man upon the path that ends in the Absolute. But a certain doctrine of Mr. Bradley's, which we could have wished to see him develop more systematically, proves that there is no necessary connection between absolutism and hedonism. In the *Principles of Logic* we find a most important though slightly mysterious logical function which critics have treated very sceptically. It appears in the alleged axiom that "all suggested ideas . . . are real, unless they are excluded" (p. 385), which is explained as "the striving for perfection, the desire of the mind for an infinite totality . . . which moves our intellect to appropriate everything from which it is not forced off" (p. 451). Now this impulse to self-development, so Mr. Bradley teaches us, is not confined to thought, but is found also in the realm of practice:

"This double effort of the mind to enlarge by all means its domain, to widen in every way both the world of knowledge and the realm of practice, shows us merely two sides of that single impulse to self-realisation, which most of us are agreed to find so mystical" (p. 452).

Here then, it seems to me, flung out by the way in the course of an alien discussion, is Mr. Bradley's answer to the question what leads us to strive towards perfection: it is the effort of the finite to expand itself to the infinite.

As no Oxford philosopher has thought fit to develop this doctrine, it would hardly be relevant to spend time in criticising it. It is enough to say that, just as Prof. Bosanquet finds himself unable to verify in his experience the impulse to affirm the unopposed (*infra*, chap. ix. § 28), so I do not verify in my own experience the impulse to expand to the Absolute. Nothing impels man to seek for cosmic harmony and inclusiveness. If moral experience be represented, in accordance with Mr. Bradley, as a desire for good, that good must be a 'human' good, as Aristotle said long ago.

§ 27. From all this it is evident that the ethical formula of Feeling-Absolutism should be realisation of the Absolute so far as lies in human power. But such a formula can never be applied practically, for no form of human action that can be suggested will bring us to the super-moral and super-relational state. Getting drunk, or suspending reason by other forms of excitement, will annihilate or at least diminish the 'separation of content from existence': but this is to sink below the relational form, not to transcend it.

This is so obvious that Mr. Bradley adopts for his ethical formula, not Absolute-realisation, but self-realisation. To it he gives a meaning that is

practical to some extent, though characteristically invalidated in the end by an incurable discrepancy. Self-realisation, he says, is the attainment of perfection, that is, of individuality; and perfection or individuality "consists . . . in both harmony and extent" (*A.R.* p. 414). According to Mr. Bradley's rather unfamiliar definitions 'harmony' means systematising and refining to the utmost every element of one's character, a process which in common language is self-assertion: while to 'extend' the self means widening to the uttermost the end pursued, which, again in common language, is self-sacrifice. Here then we have "two great divergent forms of moral goodness" (*A.R.* p. 415). Though their conflict is but partial, in the end they are hopelessly divergent (*ibid.*). The "radical vice of all goodness" points to its transcendence in the Absolute.

The reader knows already what I think of this 'transcendence,' so I delay no longer over it. My point just now is that Mr. Bradley's formula of self-realisation makes a hopeless divergence or discrepancy between his ethics and his metaphysics. For let us suppose the impossible accomplished; let us imagine a human character which is perfectly harmonious or perfectly self-assertive and also extended to the uttermost or utterly self-sacrificing, which combines in one rounded individuality all the admirable qualities of Park Lane, La Trappe and an Oxford common-room—how are we a micro-millimetre nearer to super-morality and trans-

cendence of the relational form? The human self in its furthest conceivable expansion is nothing like super-personality. So grave a discrepancy can only be explained, like most speculative discrepancies, by historical considerations. Mr. Bradley has kept on the self-realisation formula from the period when his allegiance to Hegel was closer than it is now, and has not observed its want of coherence with his newer metaphysics of the Feeling-Absolute.

§ 28. In entering upon criticism of the feeling-absolutist treatment of Religion we must be careful to keep in view the facts to be accounted for. Some remarks of Mr. Bradley's on the hedonist interpretation of morality are very apt in this connection.

"The fact [to be accounted for]," he says, "is the moral world, both on its external side of the family, society, and the State, and the work of the individual in them, and again, on its internal side of moral feeling and belief. The theory which will account for and justify these facts as a whole is the true moral theory; and any theory which cannot account for these facts may, in some other way, perhaps, be a very good and correct theory, but it is *not* a *moral* theory" (*E.S.* p. 82).

Keeping close to the line of Mr. Bradley's requirements we may say that in philosophy of religion the facts to be accounted for are the 'religious world,' both on its external side of the actual religious institutions of our country, and the work of the individual in them; and again on its internal side of religious feeling and belief. The theory which will account

for and justify these facts is the true theory of religion: while a feeling-absolutist theory which can neither justify nor account for them may be a very good and correct theory in its way, but it will *not* be a *religious* theory.

Now I would venture to lay it down that no theory of religion can justify or account for religion which overlooks its dynamic aspect, its part in furthering the active life and improvement of the world. To serious men religion is an intensely practical affair. This is recognised even by people not naturally religious: 'if God did not exist it would be necessary to invent him.' The mass of childish superstitions, unrealities, and pomposities that have attached themselves to our European religion conceal its practical character very superficially: any one with religious insight gets beneath them at once. A mind whose interest is taken up with these exterior futilities has no real claim to be considered as religious: there is strictly no such thing as dilettante religion.

Moreover, it seems essential to the full efficiency of religion that the object of it, *i.e.* God, should be regarded as perfectly good, according to the ideas of the worshipper. We know that in savage gods there is a considerable admixture of devilry; but that is at a stage before religion has become fully implicated with morals: the evolution of religion consists largely in refining out these primitive elements, an interesting process which we see going on in Plato's *Republic*. This, I suppose, is what



justifies the tremendous struggles that have been made for religious reformations : the religious consciousness feels itself paralysed by the prevalence of any conception of the divine character that is lower than the best.

§ 29. Now it is plain that feeling-absolutism negates both these elementary conditions of a religious theory. All forms of absolutism assert a static universe, the improvement of which is "nonsense, unmeaning or blasphemous" (*A.R.* p. 501); and feeling-absolutism resolves the antithesis between God and Devil. Superficially, both these negations are obscured in Mr. Bradley's presentation. Consistently, he ought to stand on the simple affirmation of the eternal and immutable perfection of the Absolute and of the world as an integral part of it: he ought to maintain that, both as a whole and as "immanent alike through every region of appearances" (*A.R.* p. 487), the Absolute always was, is, and always will be perfect. Nor does Mr. Bradley ever say anything expressly contradicting this. But, on the other hand, the sceptical treatment of finite experience all through the book conveys the impression that the Absolute cannot be perfect *now* when every region in which it appears is *now* infected, riddled, and ruined with falsity and self-contradiction. And this impression is strengthened by the quasi-eschatological language into which Mr. Bradley often drops: in the Absolute "all divisions *would be* healed up, it *would be* experience entire" (*A.R.* p. 172; italics mine



and so foll.); "the entire reality *will be* merely the object thought out," it "*will be* feeling that is satisfied completely" (*A.R.* p. 182); "in ultimate Reality, all existence and all thought and feeling *become one*" (*A.R.* p. 412). All these expressions of futurity are perhaps merely rhetorical: in any case, they may be reconciled by Mr. Bradley's Doctrine of Appearances; Reality *as it appears* is imperfect, but *as it is* it is perfect: and, moreover, he would say that time itself is but an unreal appearance; what *will be* perfect, *is* really perfect now. All the same we get an impression, which greatly palliates the static character of Mr. Bradley's universe, that the perfection of the Absolute is somehow an affair of the millenium.

In regard to the second point, that his object of religious devotion is in part immoral, false, and ugly, Mr. Bradley would plead the Doctrine of Degrees of Truth and Reality, a doctrine which, as I shall argue later, he has borrowed illegitimately from Hegel: he would say that this bad element in the Absolute is so small in quantity and so thoroughly transmuted as to be quite unobjectionable. But here we are justified in applying a 'simple dilemma.' If the bad element is both infinitesimally small and infinitely transmuted it cannot 'preserve' or represent the immense amount of immorality, falsity, and ugliness which has existed, exists, and will exist in the universe; and to preserve and represent this actual badness is just the purpose for which the absolute badness is postu-

lated : if, on the other hand, the bad element in the Absolute is appreciably large, the Absolute ceases to be an appropriate object of religious devotion. There are certain spheres in which the absolutist resolution of antitheses becomes outrageous. A sincere artist may believe, or let himself be talked into admitting, that art is a form of appearance, and that the One-and-Whole Reality is ugly as well as beautiful. But religion loses its practical efficacy as soon as we let ourselves be persuaded that the Supreme Being is diabolic as well as divine.

§ 30. These, however, are preliminary considerations. So far we only know that, in any case, Mr. Bradley's theory of religion cannot be religious; the theory itself we have not yet come to. Before we state and criticise it we may make the further preliminary remark that in formulating his theory Mr. Bradley has apparently been influenced by perception of the dangers that beset consistent absolutism. To the consistent absolutist religion is simply an emotional affirmation of the absoluteness of the Absolute, an affirmation that the One-and-All is both perfect and all-inclusive. Now, if this be held merely as a pious opinion not meant for common use, no great harm will come of it. But mix it up with any degree of fanaticism, and strange results ensue. Passion clears the reason, though narrowing its range; and the religious absolutist who really means business soon finds himself travelling along a logical path leading to momentous consequences. If the Absolute is all-inclusive, he

argues, it includes me; my will is part of the will of the Absolute: if the Absolute is perfect, always has been, always will be perfect, nothing that any part of it can do will change it. Thus runs the short and simple argument of such a faith, and history shows where it comes out. In Mr. Bradley's phrase "it idly dreams its life away in the quiet world of divine inanity, or, forced into action by chance desire, it may hallow every practice, however corrupt, by its empty spirit of devotion" (*A.R.* p. 444). In other words, the removal of personal responsibility leads to Quietism or Antinomianism, according to the temperament of the devotee.

§ 31. Such are the dangers which seem to have weighed with Mr. Bradley. The theory of religion which he adopts does avoid them, but at the cost of a considerable deviation from the strict principles of absolutism:

"The central point of religion," he says, "lies in what is called faith. . . . Its maxim is, Be sure that opposition to the good is overcome, and nevertheless act as if it were there. . . . This inner discrepancy . . . pervades the whole field of religion. We are tempted to exemplify it, once again, by the sexual passion. A man may believe in his mistress, may feel that without that faith he could not live, and may find it natural, at the same time, unceasingly to watch her. Or, again, when he does not believe in her, or perhaps even in himself, then he may desire all the more to utter, and to listen to, repeated professions. The same form of self-deception plays its part in the ceremonies of religion" (*A.R.* pp. 442 sq.).

To put it shortly, Mr. Bradley holds that religion means "making believe" that the world is made

perfect in the Absolute, while knowing it is not and acting accordingly. It is in affirming that opposition to the good does really exist that Mr. Bradley seems to be inconsistent with absolutism. The inconsistency could only be removed by arguing that the opposition is itself an unreal appearance. This would transform 'faith' into certainty, but would introduce all the dangers of Antinomianism and Quietism.

Now, though Mr. Bradley's faith-religion is not altogether static, it is very far from recognising adequately the dynamic quality of religious belief; while as a description of actual religion current at the present or at any time in the past, it can only be set down as grotesque. It reduces religion to a farce of conscious self-deception, to a weak-minded game of Let's Pretend. The faith which is and has been an indispensable element of religion is faith in the perfect goodness of God, not faith that "the whole and the individual are perfect and good" (*A.R.* p. 443). With this low view of religion it is natural for Mr. Bradley to intimate that "the pathology of the religious consciousness" would be a gruesome study:

"The man who has passed, however little, behind the scenes of the religious life must have had his moments of revolt. He must have been forced to doubt if the bloody source of so many open crimes, the parent of such inward pollution can possibly be good" (*A.R.* p. 444).

§ 32. If Mr. Bradley's theory had stopped at this point its meaning would have been plain

enough; but he has chosen to make a further development in it which considerably increases the labour of his critic. In most religious philosophies, Spinoza's or von Hartmann's for example, pantheism is a simple alternative to theism, and it is assumed that the two ways of conceiving God are mutually exclusive. But some motive, whether a lingering regard for traditional views, or dissatisfaction at the shallowness of the ordinary pantheistic substitutes (cf. *A.R.* p. 551), has induced Mr. Bradley to what looks like a compromise between theism and pantheism. The details of it are all obscure; but somehow theism is to be retained as an element in pantheism, and God is to be regarded as a wavering appearance of the Absolute. God, argues Mr. Bradley, really appears, in fact is the most real of all appearances (*A.R.* p. 449); and yet he is in unstable equilibrium, so that he "tends always to pass beyond himself: he is necessarily led to end in the Absolute, which for religion is not God" (*A.R.* p. 446).

Now any such compromise as this evidently raises more difficulties than it solves: above all there is the difficulty how Mr. Bradley conceives the being of God. We get some help on the point by recalling his dictum that "the God which could exist [*i.e.* stand as an individual and ultimate reality] would most assuredly be no God," and by comparing with it his definition of religion. Religion in general he defines as "a fixed feeling of fear, resignation, admiration, or approval, no matter

what may be the object, provided only that this feeling reaches a certain strength, and is qualified by a certain degree of reflection" (*A.R.* p. 439); and religion, "in its highest sense," is "devotion to the one perfect object which is utterly good" (*A.R.* p. 440). Now, can the "one perfect object" be anything but the Absolute? Thus, if Mr. Bradley would not repudiate what seems to be the inevitable consequence, his compromise of pantheism and theism amounts to no more than retaining God as an inadequate conception of the Absolute. I know that many expressions of Mr. Bradley's are hard to reconcile with this.

"There is nothing more real," he protests, "than what comes in religion: to compare facts such as these with what is given to us in outward existence, would be to trifle with the subject" (*A.R.* p. 449).

But in what sense can Mr. Bradley maintain that God is a 'fact' or 'appears.' We know how a tooth-ache appears (as individual sufferers we know too well); we know how a stick, a stone, how a finite self 'appear.' But how does God 'appear'? We search the familiar pages in vain. The finite particulars just enumerated appear in virtue of possessing a definite existence that reveals itself in the here and now. But this sort of existence is expressly excluded all through the sections of *Appearance and Reality* dealing with religion. We are driven then to conclude that Mr. Bradley recognises the existence of God only as an inadequate human conception. But, in that case,



the outcome of his compromise is quite trifling; if, indeed, I am right in thinking that a compromise was ever seriously intended. The reason which has made me devote so much space to it is that it does throw some light on a great question. Mr. Bradley's attempt to retain God as an appearance of the Absolute shows how a powerful mind recognises that mere pantheism does not satisfy the religious consciousness; while his failure effectively to retain God illustrates the difficulty of compromising theism with pantheism.

§ 33. This too prolonged examination of Mr. Bradley's theology will, I fear, make an unsatisfactory impression on the reader. One reason of dissatisfaction, certainly, will be that I have seemed to deal in a narrow analytical spirit with a mood of cosmic emotion. I might urge in justification that Mr. Bradley invites all the rigour of the game:

"That a man should treat of God and religion," he says, "in order merely to understand them . . . is to many of us in part unintelligible, and in part also shocking. And hence English thought on these subjects, where it has not studied in a foreign school, is practically worthless" (*A.R.* p. 450).

At present I am not trying to do more than understand the religious consciousness, and certainly do not wish to plant myself upon traditional English views. But to what an empty result the abuse of hard analysis leads we may see from the history of Spinozistic criticism. Drawn out in systematic form Spinoza comes to nothing more than blank materialism: but the critic who does not look

beyond system will never know why multitudes have found the *Ethics* a source of spiritual refreshment.

So it may be with Mr. Bradley. His recognition of the emotional demand is really the best thing in his feeling-absolutist theology. And yet we must beware of giving way upon this side too much. The worst thing that can happen to religion is that it should be regarded as an emotional luxury, or, in the common French phrase, as an adorable delusion. Better than that a belief like Attwater's in the *Ebb-Tide*: "religion is a savage thing like the universe it illuminates; savage, cold, and bare, but infinitely strong." But I do not see why we may not some day hit on a religious synthesis which will satisfy the human demand, not merely on the emotional, but also on the volitional and intellectual sides.

§ 34. This finishes my review of the results, or want of results, of the feeling-absolutist standpoint in philosophy. One or two departments have to be left out for want of documents. Political philosophy is not touched, and art gets little more from Mr. Bradley than a back-handed slap in passing. "Beauty is not really immediate, or independent, or harmonious in itself . . . like all the other aspects this also has been shown to be appearance" (*A.R.* p. 466). It is time therefore to draw to a close and to guage the success of feeling-absolutism by a standard that its author himself would recognise.

I suppose that even the least practical of



absolutist philosophers would admit that his metaphysic must make some difference to life. In the case of a thinker such as von Hartmann it is used as the basis of all the principles of conduct. And even where conduct is thought of least, as by Mr. Bradley,<sup>1</sup> there must be something positive to show, if it be only in the way of emotion, some enhancement to our appreciation of man and the world as a manifestation, however imperfect, of the One Perfection. That Mr. Bradley would assent to this contention may be inferred from the last words of *Appearance and Reality*.

"We may fairly close this work," he says, "by insisting that Reality is spiritual. There is a great saying of Hegel's, a saying too well known, and one which without some explanation I should not like to endorse. But I will end with something not very different, something perhaps more certainly the essential message of Hegel. Outside of spirit there is not, and there cannot be, any reality, and, the more that anything is spiritual, so much the more is it veritably real."

Spirituality is surely something great and noble, and an increased appreciation of the world as spiritual would be no barren outcome to a system of philosophy. The same kind of thought is expressed even more strikingly in a very recent utterance of Mr. Bradley: he is arguing there against the alleged one-sidedness of personal idealism.

"Philosophy," he says, "always will be hard, and what it promises, even in the end, is no clear theory nor any complete understanding or vision. But its certain reward

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. his sharp repudiation of the function of "teacher or preacher" (*A.R.* p. 450).

is a continual evidence and a heightened apprehension of the ineffable mystery of life, of life in all its complexity and all its unity and worth" ("On Truth and Practice" in *Mind*, N.S., No. 51, p. 335).

Here, then, something like a clear issue is raised. Philosophy ought to do all this for us; but how can it, in the form adopted by Mr. Bradley? I would maintain, on the contrary, that Mr. Bradley brings us no nearer to believing that reality is spiritual, and certainly puts us farther from appreciating life for its mystery, complexity, unity, and worth. For consider what we mean by 'spiritual.' Does not the word derive its whole meaning from human life as contrasted with nature, and from the higher parts of human life as contrasted with the lower? Conceive of gods and angels as we will, we must, to call them spirits, conceive of them as kindred to the human spirits that we know. To Reality as a whole the ordinary thinker can attribute spirituality only in some rather remote meaning. Now, does Mr. Bradley's philosophic message enable him to attribute spirituality to the world in anything more than some vague pantheistic sense? The relational form is essential to spiritual experience as we know it, and attacks upon the relational form make up the main staple of Mr. Bradley's twenty-seven chapters. Every argument in *Appearance and Reality* which is meant to prove that the Absolute is super-relational, super-personal, and super-divine should also prove that it is super-spiritual.

When we turn to his more recent formulation of the outcome of philosophy it is even plainer that Mr. Bradley's feeling-absolutism defeats his own intentions. I assent most heartily to the dictum that philosophy's reward is a "heightened apprehension of the ineffable mystery of life, of life in all its complexity and all its unity and worth." But how are we induced to appreciate the worthiness of life by becoming convinced that every element of it is infected, riddled, and ruined with falsity and self-contradiction? And where in *Appearance and Reality*, or in any other writing of Mr. Bradley, is there a single sentence which teaches us to appreciate the unity of life? Are we not told on almost every page that every element of it is incurably self-discrepant and full of jarring discords? Nor does Mr. Bradley's method help us to *appreciate* the complexity of life. For consider under what circumstances complexity is appreciable. A blind tangle, as of a mass of string which we cannot unravel, may baffle and annoy us, but we certainly never appreciate it. We only appreciate complexity when it is systematic, and we see that the purpose of the system could not be carried out more simply. Mr. Bradley's writings can only convince us of a bad sort of complexity in life: it is his interest to aggravate tangles, not to unravel them. On the same principle we may deny that Mr. Bradley helps us to appreciate life's mystery. What *is* mystery? We are familiar with the term as equivalent to mystification, or even as a euphemism for muddle;

but these meanings we are entitled to neglect in the present context. Mystery in the higher sense, which is what Mr. Bradley means, implies contact with something magnificently great but only in part revealed to us: we may know enough of it to be sure that it is great, but on what lines its greatness is carried out we cannot tell for certain. This unique experience of awe and wonder does fall to the personal idealist; for in the human self we have a principle which reveals much and gives lofty thoughts of that which is beyond revelation. But how can it be claimed by Mr. Bradley? He tells us nothing to make us appreciate the things that we know, while the feeling-analogues by which he strives to give us a notion of the Absolute do not impress us. Our life, it seems, is nothing great and leads to nothing in which we can recognise greatness. The mystery of life, in short, goes the same way as its complexity, unity, and worth; and if we do not lose spirituality too, that is only because the world is as much spiritual as unspiritual on the principles of Feeling-Absolutism.

## CHAPTER VI

### SUBJECTIVISM

§ 1. THERE are two forms of Subjectivism — one springing from the other, and showing all through its development clear traces of its origin, and yet working out very differently for metaphysics: we may call them respectively Solipsistic and Impersonal Subjectivism. Solipsistic or Individual Subjectivism is prior in origin: the other is the derivative, artificial, Hegelian form, which regards the world as constituted, not by the individual consciousness, but by an absolute world-spirit. It is summed up in the phrase that the universe is to be viewed as subject.

The two forms of subjectivism enjoy very different degrees of popularity. At present nearly every thinker is anxious to avoid what is generally spoken of as the abyss of solipsism. It is well understood that, if we start with assuming that the self is limited in the first instance to its conscious states, we shall have much difficulty in explaining how it gets outside them. And to suppose that each of us passes his existence in a closed sphere, cheered and deluded by a phantasmagoria of things

and persons which have no reality, is not only very ridiculous but also paralysing to the active powers. These considerations make themselves felt even where they are not fully realised. Hence it is that subjectivism counts for much less than either intellectualism or absolutism. It is, however, not without its own appeal: it deserves a discussion, though not a long one.

§ 2. One of the most important, because most natural, tendencies with which solipsistic subjectivism does concur is egoistic hedonism. There always has been, perhaps always will be, a hedonistic school or tendency in ethics. Now in proportion as pleasure is more sensuous and less ideal, so much the less it needs objective reference: we can imagine, sometimes experience, states of strong pleasure in which our knowledge of, and concern for, the objective sphere sinks to a minimum. Thus a theory which makes such pleasure the end of conduct not merely concurs with, but draws us towards, a solipsistic metaphysic. In this way must we explain the historical connection of sensationist hedonism with solipsism. There is a further connection in that such a metaphysic affords a sort of salve to conscience. The thorough-going subjectivist need take no trouble to consider other people, because they do not really exist. This might be illustrated by Max Stirner's impudent book *Der Einziger und sein Eigenthum*, the purport of which is to show that Fichte's philosophy justifies us in behaving just as we like: 'Cannot the ego, which creates the

universe, do what it will with its own?' No wonder that contemporary anarchism, quite divorced from sentimental philanthropy, has found an evangelist in Stirner.

§ 3. Another example of subjectivist theory closely akin to the preceding, though far less important, deserves mention for the sake of Walter Pater. There is a view of art, frequently met with at the present day<sup>1</sup> which regards it as a form of self-regarding enjoyment; so that a man may be a consummate artist, or at least a consummate connoisseur, who is entirely wrapt up in his own æsthetic sensations. One would hesitate to say that Pater held exactly this: but he certainly gives us to understand that artistic culture is definable as a susceptibility to delicate sensations, and that the business of criticism is to analyse them.

"The æsthetic critic," he says, "regards all the objects with which he has to do, all works of art, and the fairer forms of nature and human life, as powers or forces producing pleasurable sensations, each of a more or less peculiar and unique kind. This influence he feels, and wishes to explain, analysing it, and reducing it to its elements. . . . Our education becomes complete in proportion as our susceptibility to these impressions increases in depth and variety" (*Renaissance*, p. xi.).

Taken literally, Pater's definitions of art and criticism reduce them to the level of perfumery. His metaphysic, what we hear of it, is in the same solipsistic tone.

<sup>1</sup> It is implied in many passages of Prof. A. E. Taylor's *Problem of Conscience*, e.g. p. 382.



"Experience, already reduced to a swarm of impressions, is ringed round for each one of us by that thick wall of personality through which no real voice has ever pierced on its way to us, or from us to that which we can only conjecture to be without. Every one of those impressions is the impression of the individual in his isolation, each mind keeping as a solitary prisoner its own dream of a world."

Few have had a gift of artistic appreciation more sincere and comprehensive than Pater's: if he had striven for system as he strove for style he must have come to see that art is an objective interest no less than morality. There is really all the difference between the genuine artistic experience and the selfish enjoyment which reaches a sufficient pitch of æsthetic delicacy to be mistaken for something better.

§ 4. Among tendencies of a rather higher order which concur with solipsistic subjectivism is the intellectualist impatience of regarding thought as dependent on anything outside itself. This must be viewed as largely a counter-attack upon the school which treats thought as a product of sensation or a 'slave of the passions.' The language we meet with in Anglo-Hegelian writers about the self-determination of thought, though borrowed from Hegel, has a wider meaning than he gave to it. It is to be understood as vindicating against sensationism the dignity of the most dignified function of our nature.

Sympathetic as we may feel towards such a vindication, we cannot help observing that it overshoots its mark. To preserve the dignity of thought by

separating it from everything else is like preserving the dignity of a king by cutting him off from intercourse with lower mortals: isolation in either case is fatal to efficiency. It is no weak concession to the lower categories to recognise that thought must co-operate with other functions, sensation included, to form the structure of human experience.

§ 5. But that is a controversy which is passing into the background: what follows has a more contemporary interest. There is an extreme form of Voluntarism which is not content that man should bear part in moulding in his world, but would have him create it altogether. This Fichtean line of thought we find implied, I believe, in Mr. Canning Schiller. If it be so, my comment once more must be that a good tendency has overreached itself. The power of man, at least, has always the limitation that it cannot create something out of nothing; there must exist material for his faculties to act upon. And no less necessary is it that his material should have definite qualities of its own. The proverb that we cannot stick soft butter on a hook applies here: we can do nothing with objects unless they have definite qualities; and, as definite, they must limit our activity. To this, I suppose, Mr. Schiller might reply that, though reality has definite qualities, we cannot be sure what they are, and that it is therefore a good methodological assumption to suppose that reality is perfectly plastic: for by trying in all directions we are likely to obtain what we want. To this I should rejoin that we ought not to

try in *all* directions; that would be spending our strength at random: we must try in certain selected directions; which implies that something in the world of objects is fixed, provisionally at least. Moreover a methodological assumption is not a metaphysical truth: we may not know exactly what the limits are; but unless limits exist, our very trying is futile.

§ 6. Fichte is the great exemplar of a metaphysician who would create his own universe; and how unconvincing he is! Much as we may admire the loftiness of his purpose, his attempt to conjure objectivity into existence by force of the practical reason is absurd; because morality, more than any other experience, presupposes a recognition of the objective. Though psychology tells us that our belief in objective reality comes primarily from our experience of physical resistance, it ought to be added that our higher activities, morality in particular, entirely confirm the primitive belief. The plain man, at least, has seen long ago that the most essential thing in good conduct is a benevolent interest in one's fellow-creatures. These we do not create in order to love; we love them because they are there, and lovable. It is only an immoralist, like Stirner, who can afford to work out a subjectivist ethic consistently.

§ 7. Though no one now stands by the Fichtean *Weltanschauung*, 'The Ego is all,' plenty of support is forthcoming for the inversion of it adopted by

Schelling and Hegel, 'The All is Ego.' The Anglo-Hegelians have made Impersonal Subjectivism one of the dominant tendencies of contemporary thinking.

Hegel's impersonal subjectivism is summed up in the well-known phrase that the universe is to be viewed as subject, which can only mean that the existence and process of the universe are to be regarded as analogous to that of the solipsistic human subject. Well as this promises in comparison with solipsism, we shall find that it does very little towards rendering the universe as a whole intelligible; while in relation to finite selves it fails utterly.

§ 8. The main recommendation of impersonal subjectivism to British thinkers has been that it improves upon materialism. The aspiration of metaphysic is to demonstrate that the universe is spiritual, that is, of kindred nature to what is highest in man. Its spirituality is flatly denied by materialism, whereas impersonal subjectivism in some sense affirms it.

Here, however, the merit of the theory ends. Let us consider how far impersonal subjectivism is effective in helping us to understand the existence and process of the universe. Can we say that by viewing it as a solipsistic subject we understand better the universe's Mode of Existence? The mode of existence of the human subject, the only one we know directly, is conditioned throughout by its commerce with objects: its thought, volition,

feeling-tone, sensitive and emotional experience are penetrated by objective reference, a reference which is of course excluded in the case of the Absolute Subject. If there is a state of the human subject's existence in which the higher faculties are exercised without objective reference, it is when we are sitting quite still in the dark thinking of ourselves. But even here we can usually discern an implicit reference to objects; for we do not usually review ourselves in a systematic way except with reference to some line of conduct, as in moral self-examination. However, it is just possible to think away the objective reference, to imagine oneself sitting in the dark self-absorbed indefinitely. But, if this be counted as a higher activity, it certainly tends to pass into a lower one, into the blank stupor of the oriental mystic. It really gives us no help in realising the life of a Subject who is universal.

Still more inexplicable is the Process of the Absolute Subject. The human subject proceeds by action, for the most part, upon persons and things objective to him: even in cases where we may be said to act upon ourselves, as in overcoming our own reluctance to some course of action, it is objective interest that motives us. But the Absolute Subject must eternally act upon itself for the sake of itself, and proceed from one state of itself to another state of itself, in virtue of its intrinsic faculty of self-caused movement. Hegel, at the close of the *Encyclopedia*, tells us that "the eternal Idea, in the full fruition of its essence, eternally

sets itself to work, engenders and enjoys itself as absolute Mind." But do these ultra-reflexive phrases convey any real meaning?

§ 9. All these speculations on the "absolute Mind" are unsubstantial and remote, whether they be right or wrong: a difficulty of impersonal subjectivism that comes home to us more nearly attaches to the account that it gives of the relation between the Absolute Subject and the finite subjects included therein. Finite selves undoubtedly exist; the most impersonal of absolutists cannot argue otherwise: the difficulty is to explain their mode of existence within the Absolute. In the experience of the human subject there is nothing, except possibly the phenomena of double personality (quite ignored by Hegelianism), to suggest how one self can exist within another. This lack of direct experience is fatal. As soon as the Hegelian comes to make any definite statement about the relation of human selves to the Absolute Self he is driven to one of two courses: he must either let his Absolute Self fade to an almost nominal existence which does not interfere with the subordinate selves at all; or he must merge the finite selves in that which includes them. Hegel, in his strictly scientific works at least, takes the latter course. Anglo-Hegelians tend to the former: their Absolute is a constitutional monarch who reigns but leaves his subjects to manage their own affairs.

§ 10. Subjectivism, both individual and impersonal, is, when consistently developed, a very differ-



ent thing from what we actually find in the pages of its eminent exponents. Fichte discovers very early that his fundamental 'Ich bin Ich' logically requires the existence of other individual egos, of a sensuous external world, and of an Absolute Ego, popularly called God. In his *Science of Rights*, to mention one example of detailed exposition, he begins with a perfunctory recognition of subjectivist principle, but soon finds himself on a plane indistinguishable from common sense, except for an irritating pretence of deduction. The surprising thing is that he should have thought it worth while to keep up the pretence. Did he really think that from 'I am I' one could deduce the regulations of cattle-pasturing and of punishment by pillory in the ideal state? Nor is Hegel much more faithful to his Absolute Ego; he is always slipping down on to the plane of the finite selves. Outside the *Encyclopedia* we generally find ourselves moving pretty much in the familiar world, with the Absolute Subject vaguely suspended over it.

§ 11. In much of Hegel's work the subjectivism is not of either type definitely; it appears rather as a general preference for the subjectivist line of interpretation. A good example of this is his treatment of art, which, he says, arises from man's need of *self-expression*. It is this indefinite subjectivism which appears most in contemporary Oxford thought. In some points of philosophic theory there are traces also of the influence of the individual subjectivism of the sensationist school. Green's ethical



theory, in which morality is a particular form of the desire for self-satisfaction ; the current explanation of morality by the formula of self-realisation in which moral goodness is the identification of the individual with his wider self (*i.e.* society), and moral evil the retraction of the individual into his narrower, individual self, together with Prof. Bosanquet's explanation of art as the expression of subjective emotion, are instances of the mixed kind of treatment I am referring to. There are many curious pieces of subjectivist doctrine in Mr. Bradley. Among them may be mentioned his well-known doctrine of volition, though he applies the strange principle of 'immanent development' not to selves (ought there to be any selves in Mr. Bradley's philosophy ?) but to ideas ; which, however, have not the excuse for their extraordinary behaviour which Hegelian ideas can offer, not being determinations of an Absolute Idea. A more important example is his doctrine that Reality is experience, which plainly seems derived from Schelling's 'Alles ist Ich' (cf. *infra*, chap. ix. § 41). In Prof. Bosanquet's *Logic* there is a strong subjectivist influence which most students find peculiarly difficult and elusive, because they never know whether his 'self-determination of thought' refers to thought individual or to thought absolute. The former assumption is checked by the reflection that human thought never is or can be self-determined in the way that Prof. Bosanquet speaks of ; while the latter is contrary to Prof. Bosanquet's evident disbelief in anything of the nature of a

supra-human Absolute Subject (cf. *infra*, chap. x. § 11).

§ 12. I would not have it supposed from all that has just been said that the upshot of metaphysic is dualism, and that I maintain the subject-object form with which human thought works to be valid for the world-consciousness: this would be carrying anthropomorphism beyond its proper limits. It is no part of my present undertaking to attempt to determine the form of the world-consciousness: but every one feels the unsatisfactoriness of a dualism such as that of James Martineau, who held that over against God there has from all time existed Matter, the sole function of which it is to be object to the divine consciousness. We have nothing in our human experience to warrant such severance of reality into two distinct parts. But the failure of dualism does not prove the validity of subjectivist monism. The simple truth seems to be that in reference to a world-consciousness it is equally unsatisfactory to say either that it is entirely subject with itself as its own object, or that it is subject with its object permanently over against it. I have no sympathy with the gratuitous agnosticism of Herbert Spencer, and still less with that of Dean Mansel; but it seems both right and wise to call attention to the limits of human intelligence in a matter that obviously transcends it. There are many reasons for believing in a world-consciousness, but nothing to make plain by what form of thought it works: purely subjective is unsuitable; so is

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subjective-objective; most unsuitable of all is purely objective, if that term represents correctly the Unconscious of von Hartmann. Other forms of thought our minds are unable to suggest, still less to substantiate.

## CHAPTER VII

### GERMAN IDEALISM

§ 1. THE first half of my task, that of exhibiting our contemporary idola in their systematic development, is now finished; there remains the second half, which will consist in showing how they have influenced the work of certain Oxford thinkers. Were it a matter of choice I would proceed to this directly: but Oxford philosophy is so thoroughly saturated with German ideas that a preliminary historical digression is unavoidable. Two outstanding features make the latter half of the nineteenth century a well-defined period in British thought: one of them is the influence of the biological ideas championed by Herbert Spencer; the other is an idealism which has drawn its inspiration from Germany. With the former I have at present no concern, since, in the period with which I am dealing, biological writers have acted on Oxford mainly by provoking antagonism: but German Idealism has practically captured the University. Its influence began with Sir William Hamilton (1788-1856), was strengthened by H. L. Mansel (1820-71), was fully established by T. H. Green (1836-82), and has been continued by

Messrs. Bradley, Caird, Bosanquet, and others down to the present day.

Having regard to the previous character of English thought, there can be no question that the German invasion has been most salutary on the whole: the teaching of Green and his successors has enabled England to take its place in the general march of European thought. Our home-bred philosophy with all its earnestness and good sense has been sadly lacking in depth and breadth of view: the shop-keeping narrowness, which a continental statesman remarked in other sides of our national life, has left its mark upon our thinking. Before the new influence came, too much was said of man as a creature of pains and pleasures, too little of him as a free creator of ideals; too much of the human mind as a wax tablet, too little of it as supplying the formative principles of knowledge; too much of God as a moderately benevolent taskmaster, too little of him as the fount of righteousness and truth. There was but little of the philosophic spirit which views the world as from a mountain-top: no professed philosopher taught in the spirit of Plato as the spectator of all time and existence.

The offset to all this gain has been a vast extension of the influence of our three Idola. Intellectualism and subjectivism have always been noticeable in British thought, but they have been hugely reinforced from Germany: while absolutism, previously a negligible quantity, has grown to the height we find in *Appearance and Reality*. It is

the Hegelian influence just now that is predominant, and it is the Hegelian system that combines the three Idola in their most uncompromising form. None of the English thinkers whom I am about to criticise is fully intelligible out of relation to Hegel.

Thus it becomes necessary for me to attempt a sketch of German Idealism however slight: the reader will remember that its scope is strictly limited to elucidating my criticism of Green and his successors.

§ 2. Fortunately we need not go further back than Kant, and even he may be dealt with very briefly. Unlike Hegel, he is far enough away from us to make just appreciation easy: there are half-a-dozen handbooks stating clearly and impartially his position in the history of thought. Being able to take for granted a diffused understanding of his doctrine, I need only indicate those points which seem vitally important for the criticism of the English writers to be dealt with later.

The capital source of Kant's influence is that he was the great vindicator of the spiritual view of the world against the lower-categories philosophy of the Age of Enlightenment.

"The eighteenth century," says Dr. Caird, "was the age of individualism, of secularism, even, in a sense, of atheism. It sought truth by dividing and isolating its parts, with the result often that the spiritual unity of truth disappeared in the process" (*Critical Philosophy*, i 47).

It was Kant's work to vindicate knowledge, morality, and religion from a new standpoint:

"he alone saw how it was possible to unite the characteristic ideas of the Enlightenment, and especially its rational conceptions of the order and connection of finite experience, with a new vindication of those higher beliefs which the Enlightenment had rejected (*id. ib.* i. 51).

"If we wish to describe Kant's position in a single formula," says Paulsen, "we may say that he is at once the finisher and conqueror of the *Aufklärung*."

All this has long since become commonplace; what is not quite so generally understood is the nature of the method by which Kant effected his vindication. We are usually told that the Kantian method was entirely novel, a kind of philosophic standing on one's head, compared with what went before.

"The English student," says Adamson, "who has been accustomed to the analytical and psychological method of Berkeley and Hume or Mill . . . finds himself, as it were, in a new world, when he is brought into contact with the Kantian and post-Kantian speculations—a world in which at first sight all appears to be inverted or reversed" (*Fichte*, pp. 105 *sq.*).

I quite admit the unfamiliar impression that these speculations make upon the English mind, but doubt whether the method they employ is so "radically divergent" from ours as Adamson alleged, so far, at least, as they deal with the same material and lead to any tangible result. To say that the German method is metaphysical, whereas the British is psychological, really means no more than that the Germans have dealt more with metaphysics, and the English more with psychology. So far as the two nations have treated



the nature and contents of the human mind, they follow, and can follow, one method only which will lead to any fruitful results. The advance which Kant has made upon Hume is simply due to more exact and penetrating analysis of the human experience which they both investigate.

§ 3. Put shortly, the result of Kant's analysis, so far as I believe it to have stood the test of criticism, is that our experience, in addition to the element which is given, contains an element which is contributed by the mind itself. This consists, in general, of the synthetic action whereby the mind combines its states into a self-conscious unity; and, more specifically, of certain organising principles of unification, which are implied in all experience and are essential to experience as we know it. It was this principle of self-consciousness that the atomistic prejudice of Hume prevented him from discovering. His method failed, not because of an excess of psychology, but because its psychology was superficial.

Though Kant dealt elaborately with volitional experience, that is, with the Practical Reason, no less than with the Speculative, his work on that side has had nothing like the same influence on his successors: a faith-philosophy—for that is what his doctrine of the Practical Reason amounts to—can never have for science much more significance than to indicate a point at which science for the present is compelled to stop. The analysis of knowledge was the work in which Kant gained all his real success. His vindication of a spiritual view of the

world touches only the cognitive, not the conative, side of our experience.

§ 4. In regard to the conative side, indeed, he made a virtual surrender to the lower-categories philosophy that he set out to refute. To determinism he conceded that all the human action which we can understand is as much subject to the laws of matter and motion as the path of a billiard-ball; to hedonism he conceded that all the motives which fall under our cognition are motives of pleasure and pain. It was only his distinction of noumenal and phenomenal that preserved for the human ego a 'noumenal' freedom which, in some way not intelligible to our reason, makes itself operative in the world of actual experience.

And, in regard even to the cognitive side, his vindication is gravely impaired by what is called by Kantians phenomenalism, but rather deserves the name of illusionism. In the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the treatise which contains all Kant's distinctive scientific ideas, human knowledge is always of 'phénomena,' never of realities; both the real external world which is the source of the stimuli of sense, and the real ego which is the source of the categories, are essentially beyond the reach of knowledge; the world which we know is 'phenomenal of the unknown.'

§ 5. From Kant we pass to Fichte, who begins that period of German idealism with which we are more directly concerned. By this time the principles which Kant had been elaborating patiently

far away in Königsberg had begun to spread in a wonderful fermentation through the whole intellectual life of Germany. We come now to a period of excitement and exaltation when men were carried away by philosophy and wrote books which are interesting just because they reflect in some measure the fervent intellectual life of the time.

With all his immense apparatus of terminology and formal method, Kant was anything but a systematic philosopher. From the first it was evident that his doctrine was not tenable in the form in which he left it; the only question was which of the many principles put forward by him was to be regarded as predominant. Succeeding generations are pretty well agreed that the most important of his principles is that which he calls the 'synthetic unity of apperception,' which means the function of the self-conscious self in constituting its world. To Kant himself this principle of self-consciousness was less fundamental than his grand distinction of the phenomenal from the noumenal; but his preference has been reversed by posterity. With true insight Fichte selected self-consciousness as a starting-point for his endeavour to reduce Kantianism to a perfectly logical articulation. A science, he held, consists of logically consequent propositions resting on a fundamental proposition which possesses intrinsic certainty. Such a proposition he thought he could find in the self-evident statement 'I am I.' It is the aim of Fichte's "*Wissenschaftslehre*" in its earlier form to show that from this truth, which is

implied in every human judgment, the whole universe can be logically deduced.

§ 6. Before we proceed to speak of the way in which Fichte attempted this very arduous task, it will be worth while to pause a moment to consider one or two points that are important in forming an estimate of him and his successors. The first to be noted is the intensely speculative character of the movement now set on foot among the German universities, in which Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and a host of lesser men took part. By this I mean that the interest which prompted those huge idealistic constructions was nothing practical, in the sense in which other speculative movements have been practical; it belonged neither to any work of moral regeneration, nor to religious devotion, nor to ecclesiastical propaganda, nor to the development of systematic theology, nor to zeal for natural science either as a means of increasing human power and comfort or as a promising field for curious inquiry, nor to any movement for political or religious freedom, nor to revulsion against anarchy and ill-regulated enthusiasm, nor to the removal of the trammels that fetter the independence of the philosophic life, nor to the refutation of scepticism as endangering man's noblest aspirations. The interest was intrinsically philosophical in a way that the world had not seen since Aristotle, except possibly in the best days of scholasticism. Men thought that the universe could be explained by a comprehensive system, and that

it was immensely important that such a system should be constructed.

§ 7. But right though it is to insist upon the independently speculative character of German idealism after Kant onwards, the detachment must not be regarded as absolute. The value of idealistic philosophising as a corrective to moral scepticism was perfectly recognised by Fichte. His *Vocation of Man* (1800) deals in its first book with the mental condition of "Doubt," and closes with a picture, drawn with all the poignancy of a modern problem-novel, of the man who finds that mechanical determinism leads to a result which "contradicts all the profoundest aspirations, wishes and wants of his being" (*Popular Works*, i. 345). In later books of the same work Fichte deals with "Knowledge" and "Faith," with the result that "now the Eternal World rises before him more brightly, and the fundamental law of its order stands clearly and distinctly apparent to his mental vision" (*ibid.* i. 441).

Again, though the philosophic interest of the period was not dependent on the contemporary political ferment, its development was certainly promoted by political conditions: liberalism in politics and in speculation naturally advanced hand in hand. Kant was intensely radical in his quiet, bloodless way; his *Metaphysic of Morality* owes its fame to the principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity that he makes a pretence of deducing from an empty 'categorical imperative': Fichte's early professorial career was made difficult by his

well-known liberal sympathies: Hegel disliked the established order in Germany as much as anybody, till he went with many another 'lost leader' over to the conservative reaction. The same spirit of unrest which made the fortune of the tribe of continental constitution-mongers predisposed men to lend ear to philosophic theories which seem to us in our cooler age to be utterly visionary and hopelessly out of relation to fact.

Simultaneously there existed in Germany a great amount of excitement that was purely intellectual. Goethe and Schiller were, not merely contemporaries of Fichte, but residents of Weimar close to Jena where Fichte held his first professorship: it was also the bloom-time of the Romantic Movement and the completion of the intellectual awakening of Germany. Men of genius were setting forth on literary adventures, some of them to be crowned with brilliant success. Excited with the memory of recent triumphs and with the experiments which were going on before their eyes, the public were ready to lend an ear to new theories, theories of art, of poetry, of the drama, of history, of theology, and of literary criticism.

§ 8. The German universities of that time were, as they still are, so democratic and drawn from such widely various social strata that they were certain to share fully any contemporary agitation, and indeed to intensify it with their youthful ardour. To realise this needs a slight effort for us who know the historical conservatism of Oxford and its character, then and



for long afterwards, as representing the propertied and ecclesiastical classes. In Germany there was no identification of the universities with privilege. Certainly the leaders of thought were democratic enough in their origin: Kant was the son of a strap-maker, Fichte of a ribbon-weaver, Schelling of a country clergyman, Hegel of a minor government official. Men of these antecedents at the close of the eighteenth century were usually discontented and prone to change; their English university contemporaries came from classes who regarded intellectual innovations with hereditary suspicion.

Apart from the temporary causes just enumerated there have always been influences in the German universities tending to favour extreme views. It is commonplace in the learned circles of this country that German scholars, though wonderfully diligent and inventive, are not 'sound.' The cause of this 'unsoundness' is not traceable to anything in the national character; it must be due to certain points in which their university system differs from our own.

The first fact to be considered is that the German university staff is more a class apart than with us. The average professor is more of a specialist in his work; and his limited intellectual outlook is not so much corrected by worldly experience. In our own universities the teachers are men of good social culture, and are drawn from a higher stratum than in Germany. Nor is the English



teacher in any way tied to university work ; he is in demand for educational, ecclesiastical, and journalistic appointments ; he may enter the government service in an important capacity. All this contact with the great world at any rate discourages the visionary spirit which is the antithesis of 'soundness' ; it makes for sobriety of judgment, respectability, and a neutral attitude towards novel speculations.

Another very important difference between our country and Germany is the mode in which teachers are appointed. In Oxford they are appointed either by examination or with reference to the results of examination. Success in these examinations requires quickness in assimilation and in criticism, a good judgment, and some literary skill ; but, once through the ordeal, the successful competitor finds himself practically at the head of his profession. The German, on the contrary, wins his way from the status of *privat-docent* or private tutor to a professorship by a much more searching struggle. Having no 'class' to rely on, he must either attach himself to some powerful coterie, like Hegel's at Berlin, adopt their paradoxes, and prove himself an able henchman ; or he must strike out a noticeable line of his own. With a prepotent influence like Hegel's in the ascendant independence is impossible ; even a first-rate genius like Schopenhauer found himself totally extinguished. But, if the conditions permit a freer line of action, the better sort of aspirants will certainly adopt it. The

ambitious *privat-docent* makes his lectures as stimulating as possible, and sets about producing a striking book. Even when he has got his foot upon the official ladder, the German cannot afford to take things too easily. He is paid by the fees of his pupils, and his income fluctuates with their appreciation: there is, moreover, in the many universities of German-speaking Europe a vast gradation of posts offering wider or narrower possibilities; a very handsome income with a position of European celebrity rewards the highest success. In short, it 'pays' the clever German to be as productive and original as he can.

Other differences between Germany and England are due to our examination system, which, with all its faults, has some most valuable results. One result is that students are judged and classified more for their intrinsic powers than for the complexion of their opinions: in universities where there are no class-lists, pupils are too much dependent on the approval of their teachers. Another result, most valuable though not generally recognised, is that the teachers, as their turn comes round to examine, are enabled to check each other's teaching. For both these reasons the English pupil is moderate in his discipleship and the English teacher in his proselytising. The German teacher, on the other hand, is *securus adversus collegas*, and finds it conducive to his personal advancement to make his following as strong and enthusiastic as possible.

I am sorry to have delayed so long discussing matters which may seem to be of extra-philosophic interest; but I am convinced that the prolific system-making of Fichte and his successors cannot be understood without regarding it as a product of national excitement operating through academic conditions quite unfamiliar to us. The working of these conditions may be illustrated well enough from Fichte's entry into public teaching. Fichte did not take up philosophy till he was eight-and-twenty. At that time he was a private tutor in extremely bad circumstances, making a little money by an occasional pupil, and half-starving the rest of his time. He came to philosophical studies quite by accident through being asked to coach a pupil in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, which at that time (autumn 1790) he had never read. Thus he was led to study Kant seriously, and two years later he published a clever essay on religion which, being anonymous, was generally mistaken for Kant's own. This he followed up with a couple of rather revolutionary political pamphlets. The result next year (December 1793) was an invitation to Jena, then the most progressive of German universities, to fill an extraordinary professorship left vacant by Reinhold's transference to Kiel. Fichte appeared in Jena early in 1794, and delivered two courses of lectures.

"In both courses his success was immediate and pronounced. The great hall was crowded to overflowing when his public lectures were delivered, while the enthusiasm of his philosophic students soon made the technical

terms of his system familiar words in academic circles and in general literature. 'Since Reinhold left us,' writes Forberg, then a *privat-docent* at Jena, 'his philosophy, at least among us, is absolutely dead. Every trace of the "Philosophy without Nickname" has been driven from the heads of our students. They believe in Fichte as they never believed in Reinhold. Doubtless they understand him even less than they understood Reinhold, but they believe all the more stubbornly for that very reason. *Ego* and *Non-Ego* are now the symbols of the philosophers, as *Matter* and *Form* were then'" (Adamson's *Fichte*, pp. 45 sq.).

Now all this is quite strange to us. The call of Fichte, an untried and unfriended man, to a brilliant centre like Jena, merely because he had just published some striking unorthodox essays, his warm reception, the instantaneous collapse of his predecessor's coterie, the excitement among the students, their enthusiastic acceptance of a new and difficult world-theory with an elaborate terminology, the professor's lectures printed in sheets as fast as delivered and sold like evening newspapers, the speedy formation of a band of thick-and-thin admirers, the respectful admiration of some famous contemporaries like Goethe, the angry hostility of others like Nicolai and, eventually, Kant—all this has no parallel in Oxford history. The nearest thing to it is the early period of the Oxford Movement, when Newman swept scores of gifted men off their feet, when Oxford residents who thought at all thought and talked of nothing but the marvellous revival of Anglican theology, when mighty contests shook the convocation-theatre, and the appearance of a new tract convulsed the ecclesiastical world.

Altogether, then, we are certain to misunderstand the German philosophy of this period if we treat it, like Greek, or English, or the earlier German philosophy, as the work of well-balanced though exceptional intellects working under fairly normal conditions. To get the proper point of view the first consideration, certainly, is the historical development to which I am just coming; but the two matters on which I have been enlarging have also great importance. Many a worthy British student who 'has closed his Bentham and opened his Hegel' has made the mistake of trying to understand his Hegel, like Bentham, straight from the printed page; and has consequently fuddled himself much to no purpose with the pure idea, categories, concrete universals, and dialectic negativity. The fact is that Hegel is totally unintelligible out of relation to his history and to his intellectual and academic environment.

§ 9. Let us proceed with Fichte: excellent accounts of Fichte's doctrine are so accessible that it is unnecessary to do more than state it very briefly. He discarded the Kantian noumena quite summarily as meaningless abstractions on the ground that whatever is incapable of presentation to consciousness has no existence at all. Thus he makes himself free to develop his unification of philosophy from the subjective standpoint. The course of his argument is as follows. Every statement, even the simplest such as 'A is A,' implies a reference to, and therefore an assertion of, the existence of the Ego: 'A is A' only because 'I am

I.' 'I am I,' the most fundamental of all truths, expresses the fundamental act whereby the Ego posits its own being.

Having thus made his first and greatest step, Fichte's difficulty is to get from the Ego to the non-Ego without violating his own doctrine that the whole of experience must be deduced from a single principle. In the earlier statement of his "*Wissenschaftslehre*" he does appear to commit this violation. In addition to the primordial act, whereby the Ego posits itself, Fichte assumes a second act, not reducible to the first, whereby the Ego 'opposites' the non-Ego, which limits the Ego and is limited by it. In a later statement of the *Wissenschaftslehre*, however, he represents the act of opposing as essentially involved in positing:

Self-affirmation of the Ego is the primitive activity of consciousness. But such primitive activity is in itself but the ground of consciousness. The Ego, to be real, must be aware of its own activity as affirming itself. This becoming aware of its own activity Fichte calls *reflection*; and it is easily seen that the essential feature of reflection is self-limitation of the Ego. But limitation is negation; the Ego becomes aware of its own activity as positing only in and by opposition to self" (Adamson's *Fichte*, p. 160).

The dilemma in which Fichte stood is obvious: if he makes the non-Ego something truly external and opposed to the Ego, he assumes two primordial principles instead of one; if the non-Ego is 'opposed' by the Ego merely in order to bring its own activity to self-consciousness, then he is com-



mitted to a solipsistic position which is fatal to the reality of all moral striving.

Having made, legitimately or otherwise, his *salto mortale* from the Ego to the non-Ego Fichte has no serious difficulty with the rest of his deductions. Sensation, which might be regarded as presenting difficulty, he explains as "the cancelled, repressed activity of the Ego," which as cancelled and repressed is felt as something foreign and external (*Science of Knowledge*, Kroeger's trans. p. 197). We must not forget the supreme importance of activity in Fichte's system; it is through activity that he explains the act of opposing which gives us the non-Ego. Without an 'Anstoss,' a plane of impact, activity would be infinite. "Thus the practical activity of the Ego is the ground of the 'Anstoss,' which renders intelligence possible" (Adamson's *Fichte*, p. 177). In the same way Fichte deduces the existence of a plurality of souls. The Ego cannot become aware of itself as a free, active being, without at the same time positing the existence of other free and active beings.

§ 10. We meet now with a question in the interpretation of Fichte to which a straightforward answer cannot be given. It is this: Is the Ego from which all experience is deducible the individual human Ego, or is it the absolute divine Ego? A point so obvious and fundamental as this would have been settled, one would have thought, at the very outset: nevertheless it is plain that Fichte did not settle it. In the earlier statement of his



Wissenschaftslehre he speaks as though the Ego were the individual; the doctrine has, in fact, a strongly solipsistic tone. As such it tends to atheism, there being no logical place for God in any solipsistic system: deplorable as was the outbreak of intolerance which drove Fichte from his Jena professorship, we cannot fail to see that those who impeached him of atheism had plenty of matter to adduce in justification. And yet it is certain from contemporary letters and papers that Fichte even at this early period never meant to be solipsist or atheistic.<sup>1</sup>

In his later writings, on the contrary, a strong religious tone is manifest throughout; they are in fact penetrated by what would generally be called religious mysticism. No doubt the religious spirit was in Fichte all along, but it was not till his later period that he found systematic room for it. The difference may be seen by comparing the lectures on the *Vocation of the Scholar* delivered in 1794 with those of a similar title delivered after the Jena period. In the former he stands upon the level of ordinary moral exhortation; the Scholar should work for society, he is the teacher and guide of the human race, and so on. In the later lectures, on the contrary, the Scholar assumes a quasi-religious function; he is one who has penetrated to the Divine Idea which lies behind the natural world and communicates the knowledge of it to others:

<sup>1</sup> See the Memoir of Fichte (pp. 66 *seq.*) prefixed to Smith's translation of his *Popular Works*.

the Scholar is, in fact, a mouthpiece of the Deity. On the whole we are given to understand by the later writings that the Ego is divine, not individual-human.

§ 11. Though it is obvious that Fichte's opinions underwent great change as he advanced in life, it is possible to reconcile his earlier and later periods. His cosmological and religious speculations supplement and complete his earlier system. The process of the universe may be regarded as falling into two divisions, first, from God to the human ego, secondly, from the human ego to the world of experience which we know; it is the first division that was treated by Fichte in his later period.

A conspectus of Fichte's cosmology is to be had from his *Outline of the Doctrine of Knowledge*, published only four years before his death and therefore representing his mature views. From it we see that Fichte recognised the following stages in the world-process: God who is absolutely one, all-inclusive and unchangeable; God manifesting himself as consciousness in a dependent form of existence; consciousness recognising itself as a power to which an unconditional imperative is addressed; consciousness in the limited form we call perception; consciousness generating because of its indefiniteness the notions of space and matter; consciousness recognising itself as impulsive or instinctive and as exercising its power on the material world; consciousness generating the notion of Time; consciousness liberating itself

from impulse in order to apprehend the imperative and thus rising to the plane of pure thought; consciousness broken up into a multiplicity of individual-egos; the egos recognising, in order to realise the imperative, that they live in a world which is the same for all; the conscious ego overcoming in obedience to the imperative the resistance of sensuous impulse and thereby entering into the life of God. Thus Fichte seems to regard the world-process as, in a sense, circular; that is, as starting from God and passing back into Him through a process of alienation. I have given the steps as Fichte enumerates them without the transitions by which he deduces one from the other. The fact is that these transitions, which seemed then to the author's admirers flawless in their logical severity, have fallen quite out of date with us. So alien are they to contemporary modes of thought that they seem hardly capable of being intelligibly stated, still less of compelling assent to their validity.

§ 12. The development of German Idealism now proceeds through Schelling. Though thirteen years younger than Fichte, Schelling's philosophic activity overlaps closely on. Fichte came to philosophy somewhat late; Schelling, a much more precocious intelligence, started in his early student days, and began publishing as soon as he had anything to say. His earliest pamphlets date from before Fichte's epoch-making inauguration at Jena in 1794. As fast as Fichte published his doctrines

Schelling took them up and developed them in accordance with the character of his own mind; his first considerable publication appeared in the very next year, 1795. This, indeed, was the manner of Schelling's activity for about fifteen years, till Hegel's predominance silenced him. It was a hurrying and feverish time, and Schelling wrote for what seemed to him the philosophic needs of the day; there is nothing slow, mature, deep-pondering in his work of these years. His publications were not so much books as over-grown pamphlets, diffuse, suggestive, full of intellectual curiosity, easily and cleverly written. Schelling went on and on, caring little whence he started and whither he was moving; and in the end reached something like the contrary of his original position.

The task which Schelling took up, and for which he was specially qualified, was the philosophy of nature. Fichte had no tincture of natural science or artistic interest; wrapped up in metaphysics, ethics, and politics, he was content to leave nature as a mere 'Anstoss' to human activity. Schelling was a totally different character: he was full of artistic sympathies — became, in fact, connected closely both by intellectual and personal ties with the leaders of German romanticism; and his writings show a wide, though superficial, knowledge of the experiments and speculations of the great scientists of the day. Naturally he saw at once the absurdity of leaving nature in the position of a featureless plane of impact. Indeed the incon-

sistency of Fichte's position could be shown without travelling outside his own principles. At the time of his first writing on the philosophy of nature Schelling was still in agreement with the Fichtean subjectivism; he still denounced the conception of an objective realm outside consciousness, in the sense either of the crude materialists or of the Kantians, as the root of all fallacy. Apart, then, from the proofs daily accumulating of the infinite subtlety and complexity of nature, the idealist was bound to advance beyond Fichte. As a part of consciousness nature must have its own peculiar character, and that character must be deducible from the general character of consciousness.

A specimen of Schelling's work in this direction is presented in his *Ideen zu einer Philosophie der Natur*, published in 1797. A student of Hegel will be struck with the disproportionately small amount of 'deduction' that it contains. Schelling has drawn together a great mass of information about combustion, light, the atmosphere, electricity, magnetism, and so forth, but is not perpetually, like Hegel, stopping to show how each fact fits into his abstract metaphysical scheme. For whole chapters together he remains on the natural-scientific plane. But every now and then he pulls up to tell us, for example,

"that the identical essence of Nature manifests itself on one side necessarily as real unity, that is, in Matter, on the other side as ideal unity, that is, in Light; while the *An Sich* is that of which Matter and Light are themselves merely the two attributes, and from which, as from their common root, they proceed" (*Werke*, ii. p. 107).

In the years immediately following Schelling produced a large quantity of writing on the same topic; *Erster Entwurf eines Systems der Naturphilosophie* (1799), with a concise *Einleitung* to the work published separately the same year; *Allgemeine Deduction des dynamischen Processes* (1800), *Ueber den wahren Begriff der Naturphilosophie* (1801), and *Die vier edlen Metalle* (1802). In addition to these there is a great deal of *Naturphilosophie* in other writings of the same period dealing with philosophy more generally. For the reader of the present day the scientific speculations contained in these works are mere curios, interesting only so far as they throw light on the intellectual conditions of the time. One point that strikes the reader is Schelling's overweening reliance on the deductive method.

"Those theories alone can be true," he says, "which are established absolutely *a priori*; for if the principles are certain in themselves and nowhere need experience to confirm them, they must be completely universal, and, as nature can never contradict reason, must suffice for all possible phenomena, known or unknown, present or future." (*Werke*, iv. 530).

The other striking point is the extraordinarily fantastic character of many of his results. We shall notice this feature of German *Naturphilosophie* again when we come to Hegel. Good examples from Schelling are his doctrine, rigidly deduced from *a priori* principles, that all material substances are forms of iron (*Werke*, iv. 157), and that water is a form of iron which has lost all its potencies (*ibid.*

iv. 197). The treatise *On the Four Noble Metals* reads as strangely as a medieval book of alchemy.

§ 13. The most systematic and best-known work of this period of Schelling is his *System des transscendentalen Idealismus* (1800). In this he draws yet further away from Fichte in making *Naturphilosophie* not subordinate to, but co-ordinate with, mental and moral science.

"At first he regarded the philosophy of nature as simply the application of the conclusions reached in the philosophy of knowledge to external phenomena; but at length he came to the conclusion that each led to the same point by a different route, and hence that they were co-ordinate branches of philosophy. Such a view, it is at once evident, could not be final; for, if philosophy is to be a single system, there must be some principle to unite these co-ordinate departments, and such a principle must be one which shall reduce intelligence and nature to the unity of a principle higher than either. At a later period in his development this became plain to Schelling himself, but at the period to which we have now come he was content to co-ordinate the two without seeking for a unity combining both. This, then, is the view which prevails in the *Transcendental Idealism*" (Watson's *Schelling's Transcendental Idealism*, pp. 99 sq.).

§ 14. And now we come to the step which brings Schelling to that Philosophy of Identity with which his name is chiefly associated.

"Finding that neither the process by which nature advances to intelligence (*Naturphilosophie*), nor the process by which intelligence advances to nature (*Transcendental-Philosophie*), yields that unity of both which a true instinct, not to speak of his philosophical training, showed him to be the goal of philosophy, he seeks for it in the abstract identity or indifference of subject and object" (*id. ibid.* p. 208).



This is the System of Identity as set forth in Schelling's *Darstellung meines Systems der Philosophie* (1801), followed up by *Fernere Darstellungen* next year.

I am taking it for granted on expert authority that in passing to the present stage from that of the *Transcendental Idealism* Schelling made a genuine change in his opinions. He himself denied rather passionately in the preface to his *Darstellung* that he had changed at all (*Werke*, iv. pp. 107 sq.). He averred that he was now giving to the world in its totality the same unaltered system, aspects of which had been set forth in his earlier writings. However, the matter is of no practical importance in the present connection; and we know that the pride of self-consistency plays strange tricks with philosophers no less than with politicians.

The *Darstellung* is thrown into the Spinozistic form of propositions with corollaries, scholia, and so on, a form which Schelling doubtless felt to be peculiarly appropriate to a doctrine that is so Spinozistic in its tendency. To quote the first three or four propositions will show the tendency of the work :

"1. By the term 'Reason' I mean absolute reason or reason in so far as it is regarded as the total indifference of subjective and objective.

"2. Outside of Reason there is nothing, and in it is everything.

"3. Reason is perfectly one and perfectly self-equal.

"4. The highest law for the being of Reason and, as Reason is all-inclusive, for all being is the law of identity."

The law of identity is, of course, the familiar  $A = A$ ; and from this point Schelling speaks of the supreme being, which is indifferently both subjective and objective, as the Absolute Identity. From this Absolute Identity Schelling proceeds to deduce in strict form the fundamental qualities of the material world. At § 51 we read that "The first relative totality is matter"; and shortly after we have the deduction of gravity, light, magnetism, and the rest. The deduction of mind, which should have followed, is wanting.

§ 15. The philosophic activity of Hegel joins on to this period of Schelling; but, before we pass to him, a few words are necessary on Schelling's view of the organ of philosophical knowledge, this being one of his main differences from Hegel. It is treated of in his *Philosophische Briefe* of 1796 as Intellectual Intuition, and is described as follows:

"There dwells in us all a secret, wonderful faculty, by virtue of which we can withdraw from the mutations of time into our innermost disrobed selves, and there behold the Eternal under the form of immortality; such vision is our innermost and peculiar experience, on which alone depends all that we know and believe of a supra-sensible world" (*Werke*, i. p. 318).

Another aspect of the matter is given in Schelling's remarks in his *Transcendental Idealism* on what he calls the "organ of transcendental philosophy" (*Werke*, iii. p. 350 sq.). In transcendental philosophy, he says, we are studying the subject, which we perceive by means of inner sense. By inner sense we perceive, not that which is con-

structed in the objective world (as in the case of mathematics), but the constructive act of thought itself. As the inner sense is introspective, the constructive thought which I observe must be thought constructed or produced by myself, the observer; I must, therefore, be a free producer of thought before I can observe the production. Hence all philosophising is productive.

"The process by which philosophy carries on its investigations is thus in one way identical with that by which the creations of art are evolved by the artist; the difference being that in the process of creation the artist is immersed in his products, while the philosopher not only produces his objects, but contemplates intelligence in the act of producing them. Philosophy is thus an æsthetic act of the productive imagination, demanding a special effort and perhaps a peculiar faculty. No one who fails or who is unable to perform that act can have anything to say to philosophical problems, and it is not to be wondered at that men who have overloaded their memories with undigested facts, or who have come under the influence of a dead speculation, destructive of all imagination, should have entirely lost this æsthetic organ" (Watson's *Schelling's Transcendental Idealism*, pp. 103 sq.).

Hence it follows, as Schelling remarks (*Werke*, iii. p. 351), that we must not expect to find the gift for philosophy more widely diffused than the gift for poetry. Schelling's view of the organ of philosophy shares the well-known obscurity attaching to the conception of inner sense; but what is quite clear is that he regards philosophy, not only as an immediate vision, but as the vision which is the privilege of the chosen few. On both these points he is in opposition to the spirit of Hegel.

The further development of Schelling's thought from this point onward does not concern us. It is well known how the fantastic and theosophic element in him increased ; while, on the other hand, he came to see that a pantheistic Absolute Identity was but a poor substitute for the personal God of orthodox religion. But this last stage of Schelling is to be regarded as reaction against Hegel, and has had no influence upon English philosophy.

§ 16. We now come to Hegel, who is both less well understood among us and is also exerting a much larger direct influence than his predecessors. Both these facts compel a more extended treatment. There are many able accounts of Hegelianism in English, but they are written too much in the spirit of discipleship to save me from troubling the reader with the sections that follow. Nor, since Hegel is still so much under controversy, can I venture to take anything for granted. What we want just now, and have not got, is a competent exposition of Hegelianism written by some one who is not a Hegelian. And what would be no less welcome is an accurate delimitation of Hegel's influence in this country, which is still too recent to have found a historian. Green's debt to him is probably much smaller than his debt to Kant ; but the years following Green's death have seen a great growth of Anglo-Hegelianism. Not to go beyond the writers whom I intend to criticise, Prof. Bosanquet's philosophy must be regarded as an adaptation from Hegel, and

Mr. Bradley's partly as adaptation, partly as reaction in an opposite direction.

As Ueberweg puts it, "the philosophy of Hegel is a transformed and developed version of Schelling's system of identity" (*Grundriss*, 9th ed. iv, 53). Hegel had just the qualities which Schelling lacked, patience and the faculty of system; he was the organiser of the conquests of his predecessors. But he paid a heavy price for system, a far heavier price, indeed, than system usually costs. Prof. Bosanquet remarks somewhere that no movement ever had more human nature in it than German Idealism. This may justly be said of the earlier stage of the movement, but not of the later: Hegel crushed out all the human nature before he had done; his vast pile of theory is quite inhuman in its dreary formalism.

§ 17. Dr. Hutchison Stirling is wont to enlarge with his picturesque energy upon the "adamantine hardness" of Hegel. Most of this is due to the strangeness of his standpoint to the English reader, who is by nature an empirical person and expects a philosopher to explain the world as the plain man knows it. Hegel, obscure as he may be in detail, is clear enough in outline when we have got his standpoint. He starts from the assumption, inherited from Schelling, that the only absolutely real is the all-inclusive Being which is the identity of subject and object: this Being he conceives under the form of thought. According to the terminology employed in the present book Hegel is a panlogistic

absolutist. The purport of his system may be described either as a survey of the sciences from the standpoint of the absolute thought ; or as an account of the development of the absolute thought into its various forms.

Hegel's first work, *Die Phänomenologie des Geistes*, published in 1807, was meant both to justify this standpoint and to signalise the author's difference from Schelling. The story of Hegel's relations with Schelling is well known. Like Fichte, a somewhat needy private tutor with no definite prospects, he came to Jena early in 1801 to assist Schelling in defending and expounding the new philosophy. In 1803 Schelling left Jena ; and Hegel, who by that time had gained some footing of his own, drifted apart from him. The preface of the *Phenomenology* is full of bitter sarcasms against Schelling and his conception of the Absolute. So bitter are they that the difference between the two thinkers is easily over-estimated. Hegel claims for his Absolute that it is not an empty tautologous neutrum like Schelling's, but the implicit synthesis of all the development of the world. This, of course, is a mere vision ; nobody can make anything into an 'implicit synthesis of differences' by talking about it. The real purpose of the *Phenomenology*, which Hegel with characteristic lack of definiteness never makes plain in his two enormous prefaces, is to justify as the only true standpoint for philosophy his assumption that reality is Absolute Thought which is the union of subject and object.

The argument of the book is that if we take the common-sense position of the separation of subject from object, and begin with the simplest or merely sensuous form of the consciousness of objects, we find inherent contradictions in it which drive us on through successively higher forms of consciousness till we at last find rest in that highest form in which subject and object are one. Thus, as we learn from the preface to the *Wissenschaft der Logik*, the work forms a sort of introduction of the Hegelian system comparable to the introductions of the *Encyclopaedia*. Hegel in the *Phenomenology* distinguishes three main stages in the development of spirit, consciousness, self-consciousness, and a third stage which is subdivided into reason, spirit, religion, and absolute knowledge. The main part of the work is devoted to showing how each lower category proves self-contradictory under criticism; but, incidentally, Hegel reviews a vast quantity of heterogeneous matters, psychological, historical, and philosophical, ranging from electricity to Stoicism, revealed religion, "physiognomik," and phrenology. The treatment is utterly arbitrary and fantastic: in vital passages the reasoning has hardly a show of cogency:<sup>1</sup> a great display of facts is made, but no attempt to interpret them for their own sake; the most vitally important are twisted this way and that to suit the metaphysical system.<sup>2</sup>

§ 18. It was not till 1817, ten years after the

<sup>1</sup> E.g. in the interpretation of 'sensuous certainty' in pp. 71-82.

<sup>2</sup> A minor example is his treatment of Stoicism; a more important his treatment of religion.



*Phenomenology*, that Hegel gave complete expression to his philosophic views in the *Encyclopedia*, most of the interval having been occupied by the publication in successive parts of his *Wissenschaft der Logik*. This latter work presents the general method of the Hegelian treatment, and deals fully with its most important application; but in the *Encyclopedia* logic appears in its proper position as the first part of the system. How completely the Hegelian system is represented by the *Encyclopedia* we may see from the *Propädeutik*, a course of philosophical instruction for the boys' school at Nuremberg where Hegel was headmaster from his leaving Jena in 1806 to his appointment as professor at Heidelberg in 1816. The first "Cursus" of this work consists of "Rechts- Pflichten- und Religionslehre," not distinctively Hegelian, and more edificatory than philosophical; the first part of the second "Cursus" is a condensation of the *Phenomenology*; the second part of the second "Cursus" is logic; the first part of the third "Cursus" is "Begriffslehre." But both logic and "Begriffslehre" are summed up and included in the "Philosophische Encyclopädie" with which the whole system of instruction closes. Hegel lived fourteen years after the publication of the *Encyclopedia*; but he made no theoretical advance upon it, contenting himself with producing enlarged editions, or with applying its principles to the interpretation of various concrete branches of knowledge.

§ 19. The *Encyclopedia*, then, is in Wallace's

words "the only complete, matured and authentic statement of Hegel's philosophical system" (*L.H.* p. ix); it is, moreover, incomparably better studied than any other of his works. And yet it is very difficult to make out what exactly it is meant for and what its purpose is; interpreters vary and accuse each other of misrepresentation; while some one is always coming forward with a brand-new theory of what Hegel really meant. As usual, we get no help from the author himself; his introductory chapters do not introduce. Hegel (one regrets to say it) had a mind which was essentially unclear. Apparently he never said to himself at the beginning of a piece of work, Why am I writing this? and, What is it that I propose to establish?<sup>1</sup> He moved half unconsciously, almost like a natural force or current of public opinion, developing a line of thought received from others, the termination and consequences of which he never distinctly realised. Our only hope is in the perusal of the work itself in the light of its philosophical antecedents. The title informs us that it is an "Encyclopedia of the philosophical Sciences in outline." It is that, it is a presentation of those sciences from the standpoint of the Thought-Absolute; but it is something much more, it is an account of the self-unfolding of the Thought-Absolute.

<sup>1</sup> A trivial illustration is afforded by his essay on the English Reform Bill (*Werde, xxi.*), which was then agitating Europe. One may read fifteen or twenty pages of this without learning its purpose or its bearing upon the controversy. To volitional indeterminateness is due perhaps the intense obscurity of much of Hegel's writing, particularly in his earlier period. The reader is recommended to study the third chapter of the *Phenomenology* (entitled "Kraft und Verstand, etc.") as a masterpiece of confused expression.

§ 20. The latter meaning of the *Encyclopedia* lies more upon the surface and has been much more influential than the meaning which is announced on the title-page. The whole form of the work is genetic — "Pure Being makes the beginning" (*L.H.* p. 158): by the operation of 'negativität' or immanent self-opposition, category passes over into category, thesis swings round into antithesis and then coalesces with it to form synthesis, the synthesis collapses into a unity in which its factors are absorbed and so becomes a new thesis: thus the movement proceeds till at the end of the Logic we reach the final category of pure thought, *i.e.* the absolute idea, which "in its own absolute truth resolves to let the 'moment' of its particularity . . . go forth freely as Nature" (*L.H.* p. 379). In the second and third sections of the *Encyclopedia*, the Philosophy of Nature and the Philosophy of Spirit, the genetic form is still more apparent and is thrown yet more into relief by Hegel's constant appeal to the facts of science and history. Thus it is not strange that leading interpreters have regarded the *Encyclopedia* entirely in this light, as an account of the successive stages of the self-unfolding of the Absolute.<sup>1</sup>

But a short consideration shows that the *Encyclopedia* cannot be understood throughout in this way. We have only got to look at the categories of the Philosophy of Mind, such as 'recollection,' 'imagination,' 'impulses and choice,' 'constitutional

<sup>1</sup> Cf. M'Gilvray, *Principle and Method of the Hegelian Dialectic*, part I.

law,' 'external public law,' to assure ourselves that Hegel never meant each single category of his *Encyclopedia* to be taken as a state of the whole world-spirit. Still more is this the case if we consider the categories of the Philosophy of Nature; we cannot suppose that Hegel meant that the whole is at one stage in its development spatial, or electric, or chemical, or magnetic.

And there is something else pointing in the same direction which must be mentioned, though it may seem to be of too common-sense a character; it is the familiar argument that the *Encyclopedia* cannot be understood genetically because in the Hegelian view change is unreal. I know that this difficulty is got over by the plea that the dialectic is a development which is changeless; but this is a phrase into which I can put no meaning. The Hegelian must take his choice: either change is real, and then the problem will be to reconcile it with the absolute perfection of the Absolute; or it is unreal, in which case there is no development. A changeless development is not merely a 'difficult conception'; it is downright nonsense.

We must conclude then that the *Encyclopedia* is primarily what it says it is, an outline of the philosophical sciences. The Logic, which lends itself best to the other interpretation, is to be regarded as Hegel's substitute for the old logic and metaphysics, the former of which he regarded as effete, and the latter as destroyed root and branch by the Kantian separation of noumena from phenomena. Never-

theless it is certain that Hegel with characteristic unclearness did not keep the two things distinct in his mind, and in the *Logic* they are less distinct than anywhere. He apparently drops into the cosmic-developmental point of view when he makes such statements as that "everything is a syllogism" (*L.H.* p. 314). Certainly it is this interpretation of the *Encyclopedia* which, right or wrong as it may be, has been most important in the subsequent history of Hegelianism.

§ 21. Just as all that precedes the *Encyclopedia* may be regarded as leading up to it, so all that succeeds it may be regarded as applying in detail the principles there enunciated. The concrete applications of Hegelianism are much less important than is commonly supposed. Not long ago such a statement would have needed proof at length; but now it is sufficient to refer to Dr. M'Taggart's *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, as showing conclusively that Hegel cannot be quoted to settle contemporary philosophical problems. Nor should we ever go to Hegel for illuminating criticism of the facts of life and science. He never lights up darkness with a happy phrase, never glances with genial insight into a tangled problem; human character did not interest him, and his science is as fantastic as Schelling's, though much duller. There is an immense mass of fact in Hegel, but it never stands there in its own right; its business is always to illustrate the metaphysical system. A good example of Hegel's treatment of fact is contained

in his *Philosophy of History*. He offers copious extracts from the standard text-books of Greek and Roman history, but makes no sympathetic attempt to understand the Greek genius, or the Roman genius, for its own sake. "Greece is the substantial which is at the same time individual"; "the Romans were bound up in that abstract understanding which pertains to finiteness"—these are among the best of Hegel's characterisations. In any case no present-day English university teacher either of ancient or of modern history ever thinks of appealing to Hegel; he is neglected even by those who make a speciality of the philosophical treatment of the history of the ancient world.

Nor is Hegel pre-eminent in zeal for morals or religion. We cannot say of him, as of Kant, that the ultimate end of his philosophising was ethical and religious. His religion is akin to the vague emotional mood of pantheism, while in morals his keynote is rather loyalty to the established order than zeal for improvement. It is quite characteristic that with Hegel religion is not man's supreme apprehension of the supreme reality, but a category of spirit transcended and absorbed in philosophy.

Hegel's claim to permanent philosophical importance rests upon the fact that he has furnished a peculiar and interesting version of pantheism. The pantheist or absolutist tendency is so deeply rooted in human nature, perhaps we ought to say so permanent an element therein, that Hegel's panlogistic version of it will always have a claim to study.



And the *Encyclopedia* has some other notable merits: it shows Hegel as the prince of system-makers.

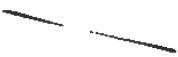
"In some men," says Prof. Wm. James, "theory is a passion, just as music is in others. . . . Such men systematise and classify and schematise and make synoptical tables and invent ideal objects for the pure love of unifying" ("Humanism and Truth once more" in *Mind*, N.S. No. 54, p. 198).

Well, Hegel was like that; and he systematised and schematised, not merely with unexampled pains and patience, but on a scale of cosmic vastness: he took man and nature and God and history and all the arts and sciences into the sweep of his abstract system. His system too is original, original in its total outcome, though the materials may have been borrowed and adapted from this source or that. Again, the system is very remote from common-sense. This, of course, makes it good as an instrument of education; for the chief educational service of philosophy is, I take it, to break up the crust of custom and second-hand way of looking at things that besets the average man. Finally Hegel, an interested observer of political movements, managed to bring his abstract system into connection with the needs and tendencies of his time. Thus Hegelianism, though primarily the most abstract of philosophies, is connected with, and in some degree represents, a certain way of viewing things that is an appreciable corrective to bad influences of social and intellectual life still unfortunately potent among us.



Altogether, then, it is not unfair to say that Hegel is really a man of one book, the book in which alone his system is authentically presented. His case is totally different from that of a philosopher like Plato. We could not spare one of the immortal dialogues; apart from their contribution to knowledge, Plato's wit and wisdom, his personality and individuality of genius receive a different illustration in each of them. On the other hand, if Hegel had never written the *Encyclopedia* how many of us would read his other books? The tedious diffuseness of the Greater Logic robs it of value; for wherever Hegel is not concise he is unendurable: the various applications of the Hegelian system to fact are valuable as illustrations of the system, not as illustrations of fact. It is the empty schematism of the Shorter Logic that shows Hegel at his best and briefest.

We shall not therefore be neglecting any vital element of Hegelianism if we confine ourselves to the *Encyclopedia*. And within that work all the detail may be safely neglected in the present connection as appealing to nothing beyond a purely technical interest. It does not really matter much, outside the technical circle, *how* Hegel works out the dialectical transitions by which category passes over into category, and whether Dr. McTaggart is right or wrong in his extensive revisions of the steps by which the transitions are made. The great point is that the dialectical attempt should have been made, and that Hegel should have



thought that he had so far mastered the plan of the world as to trace its development from Pure Being to Absolute Spirit.

§ 22. The three divisions of the *Encyclopedia* are very unequal in interest and importance. No one reads the Philosophy of Nature and few read the Philosophy of Spirit; but the Logic is a work which the world could not well spare. The difficulty is to understand what it is all about; in other words, what is the object-matter of the science which Hegel calls 'logic.' He himself in his *obscurum-per-obscurius* way defines logic as "the science of the pure idea" (*L.H.* p. 30); or, the system of pure reason, the realm of pure thought, which realm is the truth as it is without external covering in and for itself (*Werke*, iii. p. 33). "One may," he adds in popular language, "put the matter thus, that the content of logic is the representation of God as he is in his eternal essence before the creation of Nature or of any finite spirit." This, of course, is moonshine or metaphor. 'Pure idea,' 'pure thought,' 'pure reason,' and 'truth in and for itself' are panlogistic figments. And how can Hegel or any one claim to know what God was before he created the world? We get help in understanding the content of Hegelian logic by considering that, if one is to set forth an *Encyclopedia* of the philosophical sciences in the form of a genetic story of the Absolute, then to each of the sciences there must correspond a stage of the Absolute. In the Philosophies of Nature and

Spirit Hegel could find place for all the sciences except logic and metaphysics. As these, or their Hegelian substitute, would not go there, they were correlated with a perfectly 'pure' or ante-creational stage of the universe. What Hegel thought of current metaphysics and logic we learn from the preface to the first edition of the *Wissenschaft der Logik*. The former he regarded as destroyed root and branch by Kant; the latter still lingered but grew ever more jejune and unreal. He desired therefore to put forward a substitute for both in accordance with the principles of the new absolutism heralded in the *Phenomenology*. In place then of the old logic which stated the general laws of thought and of the old metaphysic which stated the general laws of reality, he put forward a new science which should contain the general principles of both thought and reality arranged in a systematically developmental form. When in the *Encyclopedia* the sciences came to be expounded under the form of the story of the development of the Absolute, a stage in the Absolute had to be postulated to correspond to this science of thought-reality, the Absolute holding itself purely by itself and not yet gone forth into the alienness of Nature.

There is in addition a formal or schematic reason for postulating the ante-creational stage of the Absolute. The mode of the Absolute's progress is triadic throughout by thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Nature and spirit are obviously marked out for antithesis and synthesis respectively. We

must therefore have a stage of thesis anterior to both; and this is the imaginary stage of 'pure reason.'

The importance of 'logic' in Hegel's eyes is shown by the fact that he elaborated it in three volumes (1812-16) before presenting it in the condensed and definitive form of the *Encyclopedia*. It is usual to justify this extended treatment by pointing out that the Shorter Logic contains the method of Hegel; we might express the matter otherwise by saying that it contains the presuppositions of the whole system. Put shortly these presuppositions are (a) that the universe may be regarded as the self-development of a Single Being or Absolute; (b) that the Single Being is thought; (c) that thought in general, whether in its absolute form or otherwise, has the quality of developing by its own inner power; (d) that the development proceeds by self-opposition, which Hegel calls "negativität"; (e) that the self-development of the Absolute takes place as, and may be presented as, a process from lower categories to successively higher ones. These seem to be the main presuppositions of the system contained in the *Encyclopedia*: they involve many subordinate ones; but all receive their fullest and clearest illustration from the Logic.

§ 23. The Logic, moreover, is much the most successful part of the *Encyclopedia*, so far as we can speak of success in so strange an enterprise. What the success amounts to is that, so long as we

can forget the actual world and keep ourselves from asking what relation the abstract thought-movement bears to actuality, we are carried along and feel in some measure the force of that self-opposition which is the *nisus* of the Hegelian universe. Several reasons may be suggested for this. As I have already said, the Logic is more definitely an account of cosmic self-development than either of the two following divisions: then, its very abstractness and unsubstantiality makes us less inclined to check it by reference to fact: further, abstractions like Pure Being, Becoming, and Determinate Being which form the early categories of the Logic are so highly rarefied that we feel sojourn among them unnatural and uncomfortable, and press on to something more concrete. What Hegel has done in the Logic is to collect a vast number of abstract notions from logic and metaphysics and arrange them in a graduated scale; and the industry and thoroughness of the collection and the skill of the graduation must always command our respect. The most abstract of these notions such as Being and Becoming are of rare and temporary use in ordinary thinking: we are glad to escape from them; and Hegel leads us skilfully onward to more familiar ground.

§ 24. But the chief reason for the success of the Logic is that its stages are, in the main, parallel to the stages of actual consciousness. We see this by reading the Logic in connection with the *Phenomenology*, and this is the reason which makes the

*Phenomenology* indispensable to the understanding of Hegel.<sup>1</sup>

The Logic is divided triadically into the doctrine of Being, the doctrine of Essence, and the doctrine of the Notion. Being, says Hegel, is thought in its immediacy, the notion implicit and in germ. It corresponds to the division "Consciousness" in the *Phenomenology*; its categories, Quality (containing being, being determinate, and being-for-self), Quantity (containing pure quantity, quantum and degree), and Measure are all appropriate to "Bewusstseyn" as described in the early sections of that work. Similarly the third division of the Logic, that which deals with the Notion, corresponds with the third division of the *Phenomenology*. This third division of the *Phenomenology* deals with that stage of consciousness in which the ego is not only object to itself but "object with the consciousness of the non-existence of any other object; it is sole object, all reality and present existence" (*P.G.* p. 170). Consciousness at this stage is regarded as constituting its object. "The position taken up by the notion is that of absolute idealism" (*L.H.* p. 287; cf. *P.G.* *l.c.*). So far the parallelism is close enough; but it is not so close between the second division of the *Phenomenology*, Self-consciousness, and the second division of the Logic, Essence; though, ultimately, one

<sup>1</sup> It is much to be regretted that no successful attempt has been made to translate this work. Prof. Royce's translation, announced many years ago, has never appeared. Mr. W. T. Harris abandoned his enterprise (begun in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*) at an early stage. Novelli's Italian translation is, if possible, harder to understand than the original. There is nothing in French.



seems to be derived from the other. 'Self-consciousness' is the realm of definite distinction in which subject confronts object, and each subject is conscious of its own identity in opposition to every other. Similarly we read in the Doctrine of Essence that "the terms in Essence are always mere pairs of correlatives," that "Essence is Being that has gone into itself," and that "reflection, or light thrown into itself, constitutes the distinction between Essence and immediate Being, and is the peculiar characteristic of Essence itself" (*L.H.* pp. 207 *sq.*). Such expressions are hardly intelligible unless we can interpret them in reference to the facts of self-consciousness. But in the further development of Essence, in various of the categories subordinate to it, we have some difficulty in tracing the reference. It would appear that desiring to make the category of general application Hegel interpreted it in a way much wider than its original meaning.

The further one gets into the Logic the less grows one's impression of its success. A vast deal of nonsense is talked about Hegel, and one of the weakest things commonly said is that he is a 'concrete' philosopher. If one may speak from one's own experience, the closer Hegel gets to fact the less interesting he becomes. Every one knows his famous first triad of Pure Being, Nothing and Becoming: what he says about them stimulates us to much profitable thought on the meaning of these highly-generalised abstractions. But how many



people know about the later and more concrete categories of the Notion, or care about the logical validity of the transitions whereby Hegel passes from one to the other? Hegel's account of 'chemism' runs as follows :

"The not-indifferent (biased) object has an immanent mode which constitutes its nature, and in which it has existence. But as it is invested with the character of total notion, it is the contradiction between this totality and the special mode of its existence. Consequently it is the constant endeavour to cancel this contradiction and to make its definite being equal to the notion" (*L.H.* p. 341).

Now, this interests nobody : it is caviare to the chemist, and not logic enough for the logician.

§ 25. The Philosophy of Nature which is dealt with in the second part of the *Encyclopedia* has been called the *partie honteuse* of the Hegelian system : unfriendly critics such as Riehl have amused themselves by making a collection of the more flagrant absurdities which Hegel indulges in. The point to insist on, however, is that it is an essential part of the system : nothing has conduced more to the misunderstanding of Hegel in this country than the comparative inaccessibility of the Philosophy of Nature.<sup>1</sup> Having taken up the position that the sciences can be set forth dialectically from the standpoint of the Absolute, Hegel only showed proper courage in tackling the inevitable problem of 'deducing' Nature. The absurdities into which he

<sup>1</sup> It is greatly to be desired, in the interest of a truer appreciation of Hegel, that this remaining portion of the *Encyclopedia* should be translated into English, preferably not from the prolix lecture-notes of the *Werke* but as its author originally published it.

fell may be palliated by the reflection that they were common to the period. When Schelling had once set the fashion, no self-respecting philosopher would be satisfied unless he put forward his Naturphilosophie with the rest. A mere enumeration of names and dates will illustrate this. Oken's *Lehrbuch der Naturphilosophie*, published in 1809, is a most elaborate effort backed with much more scientific knowledge than Hegel could claim. Steffens' *Grundzüge der philosophischen Naturwissenschaft*, published in 1806, Windischmann's *Begriff der Physik* (1802), and *Idee der Physik* (1805) are books of a similar character. And there were many others: J. J. Wagner, Nees von Esenbeck, B. H. Blasche, I. P. V. Troxler, C. A. Eschenmayer, G. H. Schubert, J. E. von Berger, and, above all, F. von Baader, are names of Hegel's contemporaries who figure in histories of philosophy as having tried their hands about this time at the same queer line of philosophising. Hegel's scientific absurdities, like Shakespeare's improprieties, are to be laid, not so much to his own account, as to that of his age.

§ 26. The unsuitability of the dialectic method of Hegel to natural science is obvious, and, at the present time of day, need hardly be pressed home; but I think that people will come to see that his method is hardly more suitable to those mental and moral sciences which are treated in the Philosophy of Spirit. Certain it is that no contemporary thinker shows the least disposition to accept, say,

Hegel's account of Art as a category developing out of Social Ethics and developing into Revealed Religion: the transitions have not the slightest touch of that cogency we welcomed in the earlier part of the Logic.

On the whole the feeling of the average reader over the Philosophy of Spirit will be, not pleasure in seeing Hegel deal ably and convincingly with concrete material, but irritation at seeing concrete material so unsympathetically distorted. Somewhere in Dr. Caird's study of Hegel there is a passage telling us that "more than most he laid himself quietly open to the influences of the time and the teachings of history." I grieve to differ from so eminent an interpreter, but anything rather than a sound historical method is suggested to my mind by perusal of this last section of the *Encyclopedia*. Everywhere fact is cited and the lessons of fact ignored. Hegel's position in the movement of German idealism alone enables one to comprehend and pardon him: Hegel does not explain history; but history explains Hegel.

§ 27. It will be seen that Hegelianism combines all the mistaken tendencies against which the first portion of this book is directed; and thus no enumeration of flaws will give an adequate conception of my difference from it. However, for the sake of raising definite issues I will enumerate points of objection. They apply for the most part equally well to the English writers of the school.

First we may notice Hegel's static-intellectualist

view of knowledge: there is no recognition that man ever *does* anything with his intelligence: according to Hegel he merely thinks with it, recognising the *fait accompli* so far as he directs intelligence to objects at all. In the case of the highest form of knowledge, philosophy, Hegel's passivity reaches its deepest depth, due no doubt to the element of absolutism in him. Not merely is the object of our knowledge a fixed unalterable system; but it is a system which discloses itself without our exertion. In ordinary sciences, I suppose Hegel would admit, we have to use *raisonnement* and search hither and thither with hypothesis and verification. But in philosophy Hegel keeps his bitterest sarcasms for *raisonnement* and for those who seek the truth by a method external to the object (cf. e.g. *P.G.* pp. 36 sq.). The true method, says Hegel, is one which identifies itself with its subject-matter.

It was this belief that his method was one with reality that gave him such intense self-confidence:

"Although I could not possibly think that the method which I have pursued—or rather which this system pursues of itself—might not be capable of much perfecting, of much thorough revising in its details, I know, nevertheless, that it is the only true method. This is clear of itself already from the fact that it is nowise distinct from its object and content; for it is the content in itself, it is *the dialectic that the content has within it*, which moves the content forward. It is clear that no treatment can pass for scientific that does not go the gait of this method and conform to its simple rhythm, for it is the gait of the subject-matter itself" (*Werke*, iii. p. 39, tr. by Prof. M'Gilvary).

*Der Gang der Sache selbst* is the keynote of Hegel's doctrine of the relation of philosophy to its object. Possibly counter-passages might be found in Hegel to mitigate the paradox of that just quoted. But, as it stands, it means that the true philosopher, such as Hegel himself, is the passive organ of reality, the mouthpiece of Deity—in the words of Fichte, "not I as an individual say this, but the Idea which speaks through me" (Adamson's *Fichte*, p. 99).

The passivity of Hegelian ethics is equally definite and equally repugnant to the best moral consciousness of our age. For Hegelianism morality is thought, not action: "the will is a special way of thinking" (*P.R.* p. 11). The world at large regards as highest the moral advance of the reformer: Hegel knows nothing higher than social loyalty. "The wisest men of antiquity have laid it down that wisdom and virtue consist in living conformably to the customs of one's people" (*P.G.* p. 258).

§ 28. Perhaps the most glaring fault of Hegel is his anti-personalism, a way of thinking that has no lack of followers in English universities. It is, of course, essential to his absolutism that he should regard all that the human spirit does, its morality, art, and religion, not as the work of persons, but as a manifestation of the Absolute Spirit. From this impersonal treatment of the mental and moral sciences comes that failure of interpretation which is so patent in the last section of the *Encyclopedia*: nothing but disaster can come from attempts to

interpret art, for example, apart from the efforts of artists. It is true that the difference between subjective and objective is recognised by Hegel; but it is in a sense totally different from what the words usually bear. For Hegel "subjective does not mean the inner as opposed to the outer. It means rather the particular, contingent, and capricious as opposed to the universal, necessary, and reasonable" (McTaggart, "Hegel's Treatment of the Subjective Notion" in *Mind*, N.S. No. 22, p. 166). Such, then, is the way in which Hegel views or accounts for personality; it is a sort of particularity or accident. This accords with the arrangement in the Logic where the categories of the Subjective Notion, which are drawn from formal logic, are subordinated to those of the Objective Notion, which are drawn from natural science. There is, of course, some slender justification for this. As opposed to the solid reasonable precepts and institutions of social life, the personal preferences and revolts of individuals have an accidental and capricious air. Hegelianism may claim it as a merit that it has emphasised the collectivist side of life, too much ignored in the England of the last generation. But to explain morality, art, and religion without reference to personality is as foolish as to explain the geological formation of the earth without reference to the sun.

§ 29. This leads us to consider the general defects of Hegel's method in the mental and moral sciences: they may be summed up by saying that



Hegel studies these sciences from the standpoint of the Absolute, whereas the true standpoint is the psychological. The neglect of personality, just mentioned, obviously belongs to this; though it has a significance reaching so far beyond scientific detail that I gave it a place by itself. A matter wide-reaching enough, and at the same time with great influence upon detail, is Hegel's treatment of sensation. For Hegel sensation must somehow be a stage or element in the development of Absolute Thought: unless he can so explain it, his whole philosophy collapses. He grapples with the question in an early section of the *Phenomenology*, and comes to the conclusion, which no contemporary psychologist would endorse for a moment, that sensation gives us nothing but "Reines Seyn." If Prof. Bosanquet is right in saying that in the interpretation of the perceptive judgment lies "the root of modern philosophy" (*Knowledge and Reality*, p. 160), it would seem that Hegelianism is rotten at the root.

Closely connected with his treatment of sensation is Hegel's neglect of interaction with the physical environment as a factor in the development of soul-life: there can, of course, be no such interaction from the standpoint of consistent Absolutism. This cuts him off entirely from all that line of psychological explanation which is connected with the name of Darwin. Altogether, it is not too much to say that Hegel's psychological speculations are quite destitute of significance for the modern investigator.



§ 30. The last point which is worth mentioning is Hegel's treatment of volition: as an intellectualist he reduces willing and all volitional phenomena, such as desire (cf. *P.G.* p. 126, and *P.M.* p. 53 *sq.*), to forms of epistemonical experience: as an absolutist he merges all personal initiative in self-surrender to the Absolute. In this he compares very unfavourably with his predecessors, Fichte and Schelling, who give us the impression that they tried to survey the whole of experience and to furnish a synthesis which should do justice to every side. In both of them, as in Kant, there is a no inconsiderable element of voluntarism: in Fichte it accounts for the divergence between the earlier and the later forms of his system: in Schelling there is an even more methodical attempt to do justice to the practical as distinguished from the intellectual side of life. But Hegel tries nothing in this way: he has the air of abandoning a province which he could not hold effectively, and, for the sake of rounding off his system, of leaving vast tracts of experience with a merely nominal explanation. The omission is fatal to his doctrine of morality, art, and religion. They are indeed hardly recognisable in the account he gives of them, wanting as it is in the elements of personality and volition.

§ 31. We come now to the kindlier task of indicating the good points of Hegel, points which largely account for his influence in England. The first and greatest may be dismissed quite shortly: it is simply his speculative power, shown in his

handling of material, in his width of outlook, and in the homogeneity of his system. These three elements of power are not always combined, but Hegel happens to combine them: his mind moves strongly and subtly in the most abstract regions of thought; his speculations are on a scale of cosmic vastness; and his system is thoroughly integrated. It is this last characteristic, indeed, which makes it impossible to modernise him. His system is so utterly out of harmony with contemporary science, that no one now can accept it in block; but, if you omit or replace any important element of it, the rest becomes unmeaning.

The next point has also been mentioned by anticipation; it is Hegel's insistence that philosophic truth is not a special intuition but entirely a matter of reason. This undoubtedly is the only sound position for an academic teacher: he must endeavour to prove all things; he cannot countenance a purely personal illumination. Moreover, there is a good democratic side to this predominance of reason: philosophy becomes the common heritage of reasonable beings, not a special gift like artistic excellence. Here our sympathies go with Hegel, though some will question whether sober experience is not, for once, on the side of Schelling.

A good point of Hegel's and one that has had great weight in England is his avoidance of solipsism, which is the great difficulty of ordinary idealism, and is felt acutely in Kant and Fichte. A monist who starts from his individual consciousness is very

hard pressed to get outside it. By Englishmen the dangers of solipsism are realised with special keenness from their experience of Hume and J. S. Mill. Now, whatever difficulties Hegel's position of impersonal or objective idealism involves, it does escape this solipsistic one. If the monist starts within a consciousness which is co-extensive with the universe, the problem how to get outside it disappears.

§ 32. There is a good deal to be said, too, for the practical tendency of Hegel, which may be described as an enlightened reactionism. Hegel, like all his intelligent contemporaries, began life as a liberal: but towards middle life he settled down as an enlightened conservative with two main antipathies, one against the fanaticism of pietistic religion, the other against the raw enthusiasm of reformers who would upset the established social order and replace it by Utopia. The former antipathy does not concern us; for it has found no echo in our country: the latter accounts for a great deal of his present influence.

The best side of Hegel's political conservatism is its loyalty to the established order. That the world is spiritual, that spirit is reasonable, that it is fully realised and not unattainably ideal, that the individual and personal are particular and capricious, are philosophemes which in combination lead straight to the position that the State is perfect. It is only by the inconsistency of distinguishing after all the rational from the actual (cf. the preface to the

*Philosophy of Right*) that Hegel escapes the abyss of 'Whatever is, is right.' All this was not uncongenial to the temper of an age recoiling from the French Revolution. In our own day, too, in England, now that our political constitution has reached comparative equilibrium, there has been a beneficent reaction of loyalty towards the State, fostered in academic circles by the influence of Hellenic studies.

Enlightened conservatism is an excellent thing, and the Hegelian influence in this direction is certain to do no harm among us; but this should not blind us to the essential falsity of the Hegelian position. If we accept literally his doctrine that spirit is perfectly realised, every thought of reform is presumptuous and mischievous. The case is the same as with advance in thought. If philosophy is perfected and completely manifest in the Hegelian system, what more is left for thinkers to do? These questions were earnestly discussed in German university life both among Hegel's pupils and among his rivals. At that date it was not so easy as it is now to take Hegel's assertions of finality in a merely Pickwickian sense.

§ 33. Though there is no definite Hegelian school in England, as Mr. Bradley very rightly protests, there is a very real Hegelian influence. In some part this is due to the suitability of the Hegelian spirit, just noticed, to the needs of the time; in part it is due to the notion, which Dr. McTaggart has done much to dispel,

that Hegel can be enlisted as an ally in certain burning theological controversies;<sup>1</sup> but mainly, I think, the influence is an incident of the beneficent permeation of England by Teutonic ideas. Men took up Hegelianism twenty or thirty years ago just because Hegelianism was 'going' at that time.

The chapters that follow, dealing as they do with the influence of fallacies that are predominant in Hegel, are incidentally and partially a contribution to the study of Anglo-Hegelianism. In preparation for these chapters, I may notice two points. The first is that Anglo-Hegelianism has never professed to take up the full Hegelian system. The explanation of this doubtless lies in the difficulty which people find in falling in with the Hegelian view of the relation of philosophy to experience. Hegel's interest is never, primarily, in explaining experience, but in effecting a certain form of metaphysical construction, for which he has, as we have seen, to make considerable anti-empirical assumptions. Into the full system of these assumptions no Englishman can follow him. I doubt if any thinker anywhere at this time of day can seriously take up strict Hegelianism, cut off as the thinking world is now from that historical development which lent the system verisimilitude in the eyes of its contemporaries. But in England, at any rate, a philosopher has no chance of a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. especially § 257 of his *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, part of the essay on "Hegelianism and Christianity."

hearing unless he is on friendly terms with Experience : he need not be empirical, but he must not be anti-empirical. Thus it is that Anglo-Hegelianism is not a systematic and, perhaps, after all, not a very deep-rooted affair. The average Anglo-Hegelian never dreams of entangling himself in the laborious complexity of the dialectic, though he falls in with so many of the phrases and tendencies of the system. He generally limits himself to such opinions of Hegelian colour as are more or less reconcilable with common sense. It is this looseness and fluidity that makes the chief difficulty in criticising Anglo-Hegelianism.

§ 34. The other point, which might be illustrated freely from my chapters on Messrs. Bradley and Bosanquet, is that the uncritical borrowing of Hegelian ideas has involved an irremediable sacrifice of philosophic thoroughness. The Hegelian system is a wonderfully coherent whole : its author was no man of insight by flashes : you cannot take part of him and leave the rest. Consider the following enumeration of Hegelian dogmas stated in their briefest terms—the universe is one thought ; the world-thought develops dialectically ; man and nature are stages of dialectic development ; sensation and will are forms of thought ; notions are concrete ; dialectic development is exemplified in history ; the philosopher can formulate the world-process. Every one of these dogmas is integral to the system : replace it by anything else and you have at once what Mr. Bradley would call “a blind

tangle of bewilderment and error." But this is the mistake that Anglo-Hegelians have made: they have attempted a patchwork of modern and Hegelian ideas. And by these inconsistencies they have confused men's minds so much that many of the younger race of students have lapsed into the fatal conviction that philosophy leads no whither, have given up thinking, and have taken to phrase-making—or to archæology.



## CHAPTER VIII

T. H. GREEN

§ 1. MY criticism of leading contemporaries, to which I come at last, does not attempt to do more than trace the influence of the Idols of the Theatre upon some of the best-known work of the writers criticised : it does not for a moment set up to judge these writers completely, still less to make an all-round survey of contemporary thought. One of the three selected, T. H. Green, is not a contemporary in the strict sense ; but I have felt justified in treating him as such, because his school is still strongly represented in the University.

The idols that beset Green's philosophy are, as we shall see, Intellectualism and Subjectivism ; and, strange to say, neither of them harmonises with his personality or with his detailed treatment of ethical and social problems. Even among our practical and sensible race of English thinkers there are few who have felt more strongly than Green that life is striving, or have had a firmer grasp upon objective reality. And yet it is certain that these convictions have not told sufficiently upon the main structure of his system : we shall find that he shows tendency

both to a static-intellectualist view of the world, and also to ignore the truth that the objective side of experience is co-ordinate with the subjective. These errors in Green, so contrary to what we might expect both from the details of his ethics and from his personal history and character, can be explained only by his submission to the influence of German idealism.

§ 2. Green, who came up to Oxford in 1855, had, even as a schoolboy, laid himself open to the best influences of his time. The intellectual torpor of the eighteenth century still hung round the isolated university; but outside it was high summer. Contemporary literature was full of moral and religious aspiration: Wordsworth, Coleridge, Tennyson, Browning, Carlyle, Emerson, and Ruskin had been throwing out in fragments ideas like those to which Green afterwards gave systematic expression. And no less important in his environment were the political philanthropists and statesmen, of whom John Bright may be specially mentioned as approaching Green's ideal of a worker in the cause of society.

As Green's was a nature which, though capable of much development, was incapable of radical change, we can infer with sufficient assurance from a survey of his printed work that religion and morals were the staple of his meditations in the youthful period when he was looking out for guidance. Even his logical and epistemological inquiries tend in this direction; for they recur con-

tinually to the vindication of a unitary subject of knowledge, as opposed to the 'loose and separate' sensationalism of Hume; to the existence of a system of objects which is known, as opposed to subjectivism of the sceptics; and to the creative activity of the self in forming its world of experience, as opposed to the wax-tablet theory of Locke. Certain facts and conceptions of morals and religion—a Central Source of all power, goodness, and beauty, man's close dependence thereon yet free control of his destiny, the immortality of the soul, the brotherhood of mankind, the moral value of common duties and relationships, the solidarity of reason and virtue, the rights and duties of citizens as partners in the greatest and strongest of moral institutions—such were the themes on which his mind was bent, and for which he kept seeking adequate formulation.

§ 3. But the principles which held the field at the University just then either gave small help for his line of thought or tended in exactly the contrary direction. For those who have grown up in the triumph of the idealism which Green championed, it will always be hard to realise that in the fifties and sixties the most potent intellectual influence at Oxford was that of John Stuart Mill, to whose hedonism and sensationism there had allied themselves the biological ideas represented by the name of Darwin. As we see from his elaborate criticisms of Mill, Herbert Spencer, and G. H. Lewes, and from the early sections of the *Prolegomena*, to be

mentioned later, these were the tendencies which Green, as the vindicator of spiritual experience, made it his mission to oppose: and the subsequent history of thought at Oxford shows the completeness of his victory.

We must not forget, however, that Green was considerably influenced, both in ethics and politics, by the foes whom he overcame: instances of this from the *Prolegomena* will meet us later. Indeed no well-natured young man at that time could fail to learn much from Mill, who had converted Oxford really because what he offered was better than the established ideas. True, utilitarianism was atheistic or suspected to be such: but were people of fine religious sentiment likely to be satisfied by the agnostic dogmatism of theologians such as Mansel? The Utilitarians were zealous for improvement social and individual; Mansel used his witty pen on behalf of the party of 'organised torpor.' And, with all his vigorous polemic against Mill's theory of Knowledge, Green could not fail to see that it was a great advance on the traditional handbooks. Mill's *System of Logic* (published in 1843) must have come as an unspeakable refreshment to the younger generation foredone with the aridities of the *Artis Logicae Rudimenta*. Notwithstanding the later reaction against his system, it is now generally recognised that he did the inestimable service of recalling logic to reality away from the verbalism and formalist manipulation of the degenerate Aristotelians.

§ 4. We have, then, to suppose Green as a junior student chafing against the predominance of the lower-categories philosophy of the utilitarians, sensationists, and biologists,<sup>1</sup> and looking round in his intellectual environment for principles to refute them. In estimating the educational influences to which he was exposed, we must remember that the higher instruction at Oxford had always been based on writings of Aristotle, to which portions of Plato had been added shortly before Green's matriculation.

"About the time that Green began to lecture in Oxford," says Nettleship in his Memoir of Green, "the study of Plato and Aristotle had lately entered on a new phase. With an increased knowledge of German philosophy, and especially of German history of philosophy, working through men like Jowett and Pattison, it had become (to use a current antithesis) less 'literary' and more 'philosophical.' In other words, their works had begun to be treated less as instructive analyses or brilliant criticisms of the commonplaces of culture, and more as partial expressions of systematic views of human life and the world."

Green, however, was not "one of those to whom the products of the Greek genius have a unique attraction or interest," and "it is probable that, if he had been free to choose, he would not have spent upon Aristotle so much of his force as a teacher."

It is true that

"the theory of life which found its final expression in Aristotle appealed to him on its own merits, because it

<sup>1</sup> The reader who wishes to learn more of the line of thought opposed to Green, will find a clever example in *Physical Ethics*, published in 1869 by Alfred Barratt, fellow of Brasenose. It is a fault of Nettleship's Memoir that, though Green was a great borrower and controversialist, it says little of the books and men who influenced him, either by attraction or repulsion.

was based substantially upon the same principles as his own, the principle that the higher or rational nature in man is that in which the impulse to knowledge and the impulse to society have their common root; that this is what makes him most truly man and most like God; and that to promote the growth of this nature is the highest service that he can render to his fellowmen" (Memoir in Green's *Works*, vol. iii. pp. lxx. sq.).

But, helpful as Greek thought was to Green, his was essentially a non-antiquarian mind, which could not help seeking its work in carrying forward the thought of its own age. His metaphysic is all modern; and the Aristotelian influence appears most in certain features of his ethics and politics, forming a valuable corrective to the individualism of current theory and the *laissez-faire* practice of the Manchester school to which he otherwise adhered.

§ 5. Nor was Green likely to go back to the great British thinkers of the eighteenth century, in the criticism of whom he afterwards made his reputation. The eighteenth century is the period which illustrates our national limitations most acutely: the flame of thought, never too strong, burnt low in the spiritual gloom which hung over our universities and polite society. Among those who led in intellect religious experience had grown poor and cold. Thinkers busied themselves round about religion rather than with it. The age of evidence-makers came in: in the former half of the century they employed themselves in proving the Christian theology by appealing to its inherent reasonable-

ness, in the latter half by marshalling the external testimony in its behalf.<sup>1</sup> The further the century advances the less of interest is there in orthodox religion. The Deistic controversy which spreads through the early part of the century is not an inspiring one; neither side rises much above the view of God as Great First Cause: but it is better than the Paley period which succeeded it. The moral philosophy of the eighteenth century is better than its divinity; but even at its best, as in Hume's *Inquiry*, it is too much taken up with proving that virtuous conduct, though not necessarily done for the sake of happiness, leads unfailingly to happiness: while at its worst, as in Paley's *Moral and Political Philosophy* (published 1785), the very nature of moral experience has been forgotten, and we are down on the lowest level of prudential and classificatory ethics. Nowhere in the eighteenth century is there any philosophic effort to bring morality into relation with the widest facts and speculations of religion and metaphysics; there is no subtlety of moral psychology, no attempt to co-ordinate the moral faculty with the faculties concerned in art and knowledge. In short, there is no sustained effort to see human nature as a whole and in its total relation to God and the world.

§ 6. Still less likely was it that Green would get much help from contemporary orthodoxy, represented by H. L. Mansel, then much the most

<sup>1</sup> See Mark Pattison, "Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1750," in *Essays and Reviews*.



distinguished philosophical writer among Oxford residents. The work of his which bears most on Green's subjects is the *Limits of Religious Thought* (1858), which, delivered as Bampton Lectures, made great stir in the thinking world. Its thesis, only too familiar in apologetic literature, is that, as human reason is incapable of attaining unassisted to a knowledge of God, we must rely entirely on what Scripture tells us about Him. The usual theological arguments for the imbecility of reason are reinforced by Kantian principles, which had recently been brought into vogue by Sir William Hamilton. Mansel, carrying forward the Kantian-Hamiltonian agnosticism, and availing himself of the distinction, now worn threadbare, between the speculative and regulative uses of reason, proves to his own satisfaction that we can form no conception whatever of God, not even of his moral qualities. Such an argument, even if its logical issue is not atheism, as Mr. Goldwin Smith argued with some plausibility,<sup>1</sup> certainly puts a most humiliating barrier between God and man, and deprives us of all standing-ground for criticising the moral value of creeds offered for our acceptance. It is not strange that Mansel's school is now extinct in Oxford, and that another thinker, *i.e.* Green himself, has been preferred before him as the philosopher cherished of Anglican theologians.

§ 7. At the most critical period in his mental

<sup>1</sup> See the cutting criticism in his *Rational Religion and the rationalistic Objections of the Bampton Lecturer for 1858*.

development, Green, as a Balliol undergraduate, had the good fortune to come under the influence of Jowett. "At this time," says Jowett's biographer, writing of the period 1854-60, "he still encouraged the ablest of his pupils in the study of Hegel" (*Life*, vol. i. 261). No doubt it was by Jowett that Green was introduced to German philosophy, and he must have realised quickly that principles were to be found there of which English philosophy stood greatly in need. These principles he made it his work to naturalise in Oxford. Not that the German influence on the University begins with Green. Mansel's writings are largely influenced by Kant, and show some acquaintance with Fichte and Hegel: Jowett's intellectual curiosity had led him to take interest in German idealism. But Mansel had assimilated only the negative side of Kantianism; while Jowett's writing, before he devoted himself finally to classical interpretation, deals mainly with theology. Green was the first to use German ideas effectively in the criticism of English philosophy and in forming a system of his own.

If it seem strange that German ideas had taken so long to establish themselves among us, the explanation must be sought partly in our general ignorance of the language, partly in the backward intellectual conditions of the isolated and unreformed university, partly in the distraction of other interests. The formation of a new Anglican theology on the one side, and, on the other, reform, social, political, ecclesiastical, and academic, had

engrossed the very few thinking minds whose energy was not absorbed by regular tutorial duties.<sup>1</sup>

§ 8. It would be interesting to discuss the question, if it fell within my scope, what relation exactly Green's philosophy bears to German thinkers, more especially to Hegel; a question concerning which great differences of opinion exist among competent judges.<sup>2</sup> In his earlier essays on "The Philosophy of Aristotle" (1866) and on "Popular Philosophy in its relation to Life" (1868) a Hegelian tone is noticeable, more strongly in the earlier than in the later. Subsequently he seems to have turned towards Kant, and to have got more and more out of sympathy with Hegelianism as time went on. Towards the end of his life he remarked to Henry Sidgwick, "I looked into Hegel the other day, and found it a strange *Wirrwarr*."<sup>3</sup> The fact is that though Green, like Hegel, was for ever pre-occupied with the spiritual side of the universe, he could not agree with Hegel's tacit assumption of the Absolute as the basis of all his philosophising. He

<sup>1</sup> The level of philosophic study in Oxford during the first half of the nineteenth century may be gauged by the performances of two of our professors, R. D. Hampden (afterwards Professor of Divinity and Bishop of Hereford, White's Professor of Moral Philosophy, 1834-36, and his successor, William Sewell, 1836-41. Hampden published *A Course of Lectures introductory to the Study of Moral Philosophy* in 1835, which is inoffensive and quite colourless. Sewell published a little book on *Christian Morals* in 1840, which is extremely silly and highly sacerdotal. Neither work shows knowledge of anything later than Aristotle. Up to Mansel's election in 1850 the series of Oxford philosophical professors might be envied for its decent obscurity by the least progressive university in Spain.

<sup>2</sup> Prof. Case agrees with common opinion in classing Green as a Hegelian; Prof. James Ward, so I gathered from a recent conversation, regards the Hegelian element in him as slight or non-existent. It seems to me that though Green owed much to Hegel and still more to Kant, his position is too individual to allow him to be termed a follower of either.

<sup>3</sup> Sidgwick, "The Philosophy of T. H. Green," in *Mind*, N.S. No. 37, p. 19.

thought that the Spiritual Principle ought to be established by an inductive analysis of the facts of consciousness and of Nature (*vide supra*, chap. iv. § 29). Obviously he borrowed from Hegel the general idea that the universe is spiritual throughout; but his attitude to German Idealism is best expressed by his well-known phrase, "It must all be done over again."

§ 9. In his critical writings Green arms himself with German principles when he attacks the traditional English philosophy and the modifications of it recently brought into vogue by John Mill, Herbert Spencer, and the Comtists. To the sensationist dictum, *nihil in intellectu quod non prius in sensu*, Leibnitz had added the proviso, *nisi intellectus ipse*: the enforcement of this proviso is the sum and substance of Green's criticism of sensationist and biological philosophy. Having learnt from Kant what is the nature of the contribution which the mind itself makes to our experience, he shows that this contribution is ignored or tacitly assumed by his opponents. Mill in his *Examination of Hamilton* (p. 231, 1st ed.) admits it as a final inexplicability that the mind "which *ex hypothesi* is but a series of feelings should be aware of itself as a series." In the *Prolegomena to Ethics*, Green retorts this inexplicability on Mill with endless variations of statement: a succession of changes can never generate a consciousness of change (§§ 18, 35, 84). And this is typical of his whole criti-

- cism. The self, the objective world, the pure perceptions and conceptions, the ideas of reason, these are what he challenged his opponents to explain, and condemned them for not explaining.

§ 10. Green was not one of those philosophers who come early into full possession of their powers, and, having launched their novelty on the world, remain with little more to say. Whether from indolence and intellectual irresolution, or influenced by the excessively critical atmosphere of his University, or from pressure of college duties, he went through a very long preliminary training before he roused himself to put forth constructive work of his own. Dying at the age of forty-five, he left no construction save what we find in the *Prolegomena* and the *Lectures on Political Obligation*, and even of the latter work the main bulk is critical. The *Political Obligation* may for present purposes be left aside. It represents Green's first-hand experience strengthened and purified by Greek ideals. The main thesis is simply the truth (which needed enforcement more at that time than now) that the state is not only a liberty-and-property defence association, but a moral institution in the highest sense of the term.

Thus it is the *Prolegomena to Ethics* only which calls for detailed criticism. I shall treat it less as a historical document than as a living contemporary book: in spite of the march of theory it still represents an extant and not unimportant philosophic

tradition ; and it is likely to be accepted in its main positions by many of the junior students who are wont to use it as an introduction to the higher branches of speculation.

§ 11. The title, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, though probably indicating with accuracy the design with which Green started, hardly corresponds with the execution. Just before Green's arrival at the University, Mansel had published his well-known *Prolegomena Logica*, which was "intended as an inquiry into that which in the order of nature is prior to Logic ; though in the order of time it is of later scientific development" (p. 1). Logic, according to Mansel's definition, was the traditional Formal Logic, and the inquiries of his *Prolegomena* discuss for the most part the relations between logic and psychology. In the same way, we may conjecture, Green intended to discuss the metaphysical and psychological questions preliminary to ethics in the narrower sense ; but found, when he came to the psychological part, that he was led on into the main body of the subject. In any case the present-day reader would say without hesitation that only about a third of the book can be regarded as prolegomena ; the rest deals with ethics in the accepted sense, and there are few of the headings of an ordinary ethical manual which the book leaves untouched.

§ 12. The part of Green's book, then, which corresponds strictly to the title "*Prolegomena*," does not extend much beyond the first hundred



pages ; and it is these pages, comprising the first book on the "Metaphysics of Knowledge" and the first chapter of the second book on the "Freedom of the Will," that contain the metaphysical basis of ethics which is the main object of my present criticism. Their design is to vindicate the spirituality of the world and of man in opposition to the current naturalism. English culture just then was subjected to the full tyranny of the lower categories: the true and distinctive character of intellectual and moral experience was ignored by the authorities highest in repute. Physicists, biologists, physiologists, sensationists, positivists were busy explaining spiritual experience in terms of matter and motion, or by categories hardly less alien to spirit. In his introductory chapter Green shows what must result from the excursion of scientific men beyond their proper boundaries, and from reducing ethics to a province of natural science (§ 2).<sup>1</sup> The "phenomena of moral life" will be explained as having been moulded by "evolution and descent" out of animal susceptibilities and sympathies (§ 5); man's supposed freedom of action will become a special case of determination; and freedom, like chance, will be recognised as "merely a verbal substantiation of the abstraction of our ignorance" (§ 6); the "practical or preceptive part" of morals will then be abolished, since, "to a being who is simply a result of natural forces, an injunction to conform to their laws is unmeaning" (§ 7). Viewed from the

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to § 2 of the *Prolegomena*, and so for the rest of this chapter.



standpoint of "modern enlightenment," moral exhortation therefore will be recognised as a form of pious fraud (§ 8). This last conclusion, however, not to mention those which preceded it, is "of a kind to give us pause," and, as Green remarks, suggests a reconsideration of the premisses which led to it. Let us, he says, retrace our steps a little. The naturalistic philosopher has just explained himself as a natural force resulting from other natural forces: but is it credible or conceivable that a merely natural force should thus rise to articulate expression and give so elaborate an account of its own existence? If science affirms that in our world and our personal existence there is nothing but matter, motion, and sensation, does not the very fact that men have *science* prove the existence in them of an intellectual principle which is neither material nor sensational? And thus, when we have established by an analysis of man's intellectual experience the existence in him of a principle more than natural, the way will then be open to prove that the same principle in man has yet another form of expression, *i.e.* the experience which we call moral (§ 8).

§ 13. Thus it is primarily by analysis of knowledge that Green hopes to establish a basis for a spiritual view of morals. In so doing he was acting, and acting consciously, in accordance with Kant (§§ 8, 11). There is indeed much similarity between Kant and Green both in their difficulties with the lower-categories philosophy and in

their mode of fighting it. Kant had accepted the doctrine of the sceptics as so far convincing that he gave up hope of finding any empirical foundation for morality. It was for this reason that he thought himself compelled to attempt to deduce the attributes of the moral law from the barest necessary quality of reason as such, *i.e.* its quality of acting according to law. "If all matter is removed from the law, that is, every object that is capable of determining the will, nothing is left but the mere form of a universal system of law" (Watson's *Philosophy of Kant*, p. 265). Reverence for this bare form, according to Kant, is the root of morals. Now Green, like Kant, was immensely impressed by the strength of the naturalists' argument, by the multitude of their array, and by their hold upon 'culture' (§ 2); he concedes much ground to them; he fights almost forlornly as with his back against a wall. The spiritual moralist at the present day takes a bolder line: he feels entitled to accept moral experience at its face-value; he assumes that the onus of proof rests with those who deny the validity of principles which everybody acts upon. But Green doubted if he could afford to do this: he thought it wiser to take lower ground; he would not assume anything that the naturalists could dispute; he would start, not with any of the higher powers of our intelligence, but with "the simplest perception of sensible things" (§ 64).<sup>1</sup> The naturalist

<sup>1</sup> Green's analysis of perception, which is delayed till his second chapter, ought, as a matter of arrangement, to have come at the beginning of his first.

may dispute our possession of the higher powers, but must concede at least the exercise of perception (§ 65). For when he asserts that "all the so-called functions of the soul" are conditioned by matter and motion, he implies that matter and motion are objects of perceptive knowledge. If they were not objects of knowledge he could not know that consciousness is conditioned by them (§ 9). Thus the most material of materialists must admit that to some extent men have knowledge of facts. An adequate analysis of knowledge even in its simplest act will prove, so Green argues, the existence, both in the knowing subject and in the object, of a spiritual principle which is the basis of moral experience.

§ 14. Green's analysis of knowledge I will now attempt to give in brief outline. The task has its difficulties, because, owing doubtless to want of final revision, the argument of the early chapters of the *Prolegomena* is not altogether easy to follow: I can only hope I have fallen into no serious misrepresentation. After my statement of Green's views will come the criticism I have to make on them; but the reader as he goes along cannot fail to notice the static-intellectualist bias of Green's treatment. It is doubtful if any such analysis could do what Green expects of it: the basis of practice can hardly be disclosed by a study of cognition. Still less can this be looked for when knowledge is interpreted with neglect of all its dynamic and purposive implications.

Green makes his beginning from the irrefutable proposition that every one, save the inarticulate sceptic, must admit that to some degree we know facts. Taking the statement 'I know this fact' he asks us to fix attention first upon the 'I know.' The being who can say 'I know' must experience more than a succession of unrelated sensitive experiences: in order to form knowledge experiences must be definitely related to each other; for, otherwise, they would not form "the connected system called the world of experience" (§ 80), nor would they, apart from their relational quality, be the experience that we know them for (§ 12).<sup>1</sup> Now this relational element in knowledge implies a relating Principle which cannot be resolved into a mere succession: it implies a Principle which distinguishes itself from the sensitive changes of the subject, and by combining them into a connected experience establishes relations between them (§ 32). If we call the merely sensitive series of changes a 'natural' series, then the appropriate and safest epithet for the combining Principle is 'spiritual' (§ 54). The sharp antithesis between 'natural' and 'spiritual' marks the radical difference between change and consciousness of change. Thus an analysis of knowledge discloses the existence of a Spiritual Principle in the knower.

§ 15. Next let us turn to consider what is im-

<sup>1</sup> There is some very doubtful reasoning in this section, more especially in connection with the illustration of the engine-driver. This compels me to make selection from what Green says, instead of reproducing his argument entire.

plied in 'a fact.' Fact, as the real, implies fancy or illusion as the unreal (§ 14). Not that anything existing is entirely unreal: even the wildest fancy has a certain realness of its own (§§ 12, 22, 23); and yet it has not the precise quality of realness that we attribute to fact. Now fancy can only be distinguished from that which is not fancy by a criterion; and thus 'fact' implies a criterion of fact. This criterion must be a conception of the objective system of the world with which we compare our judgments as we make them (§ 13). Now just as the mental contents of an intelligent consciousness cannot consist of 'loose and separate' sensations, so the world-system cannot consist of unrelated elements: as being a system it must contain relations, which are as real as anything else (§ 20). But relations once more imply a relating Principle (§ 27), which constitutes the unity of the world (§ 28), just as a spiritual principle constitutes the unity of each individual human intelligence. Such a Principle must be of quality analogous to our own intelligence (§§ 29, 52); for that is the only relating principle we know at first-hand: to it also the term 'spiritual' is appropriate. Thus does Green prove a Spiritual Principle in nature that is known, parallel in its function to the spiritual principle in the human intelligence that knows.

§ 16. Though, as I hope to show later, the foregoing argument is faulty as tending too much to subjectivism, yet many people are disposed to accept

it who would decline to follow Green in his further definition of the world-system or nature. This further definition stands too conspicuously in the *Prolegomena* and is too well known to be omitted from my outline; but it is hardly essential to his main argument, and is also expressed with some uncertainty by its author. Arguing from the position that every reality must indispensably contain a relational element, so that if the relations be thought away nothing remains of which anything can be said, Green seems to proceed to the further position that reality must consist entirely of relations. And, moreover, since "whatever anything is really it is unalterably" (§ 24) nature must be regarded as "a single and unalterable system of relations" (§ 21). To this the obvious objection has been made that relations are inconceivable apart from elements which are related. But as a fact Green himself is not unaware of this objection: when he is using stricter language he speaks of the world as "a single and eternal system of related elements" (§ 14), not "relations." And later on he quotes an imaginary objector as saying "we cannot reduce the world of experience to a web of relations in which nothing is related" (§ 42). By considering various passages (e.g. §§ 28, 50, 53) we can see that Green would have had little or no interest in affirming that relations are all in all: his interest lay in affirming, as against the materialists, that relations are indispensable; and against the sensationists, that there is no such

thing as given, simple sensations. A much more serious objection might be made against Green's conception of the world-system as consisting of *unalterable* relations. But of this we will speak presently.

§ 17. Thus, according to Green, does the analysis of knowledge result in assuring us of a spiritual principle in man upon the one hand, and, upon the other hand, of a precisely parallel Spiritual Principle in nature. Upon this result he bases the two cardinal doctrines of his ethical system. The first of these doctrines is that the spiritual principle in man is a reproduction of the spiritual principle in nature, which Green usually terms the Eternal Consciousness. In later criticisms (*infra*, §§ 20, 28, 32) we shall see how much obscurity attends this Doctrine of Reproduction: Green never faced its difficulties, and never even marshalled his reasons in support of it. Sometimes he speaks as though the doctrine were self-evident; "taking all the facts of the case together, we cannot express them otherwise" (§ 82). It is only by putting together various incidental remarks that we learn what Green considered the 'facts' to be. Most important among them undoubtedly is the attribute of timelessness which Green regarded as common to the Eternal and the human consciousnesses (§§ 18, 74); another is the unifying quality which belongs to both (§ 71); and thirdly there is the consideration that, if the human consciousness does not spring from the divine, we have to postulate a pre-established



harmony to account for the correspondence between the order of nature and our conception of it (§§ 19, 33).

His second cardinal doctrine drawn from the analysis of knowledge is that man is a Free Cause. "In virtue of his character as knowing . . . we are entitled to say that man is, according to a certain well-defined meaning of the term, a free cause" (§ 74). A cause which is unfree, Green explains, is one which stands in relations of invariable determination; and as the human consciousness is a source of relations it cannot be subject to them, and therefore cannot be determined as merely natural causes are. It is therefore a free cause.

§ 18. Though the foregoing is not the whole of Green's metaphysic, it is the most important part of it; and at this point we may not unfairly pause to measure his success. Green's intention was to justify the metaphysical presuppositions of Christian theism—the existence of a moral Deity to whom the human spirit is akin, and human freedom in moral action. The sum of my criticism is that, by viewing the world as static, and by confining his analysis of human experience to the element of knowledge statically understood, he remains at an immeasurable distance from Christian theism, and can furnish no sort of satisfactory theoretic basis for religion and morality.

It is one of the oddest things in the *Prolegomena*

to *Ethics* that Green after his proof of the Eternal Consciousness or spiritual principle in nature should have supposed that he had demonstrated theism. It needs no argument to show that even if Green's proof of a universal relating consciousness were successful he has done nothing towards proving either the intellectual or the moral qualities which are essential to our conception of God. A relating consciousness even in the highest sense of the term is not the same as God.

But even as a principle of relation Green's Eternal Consciousness is not established upon the highest level. Every one knows how levels of relation differ: introspection shows our personal consciousness acting as a relating principle with various degrees of power. Occasions on which our minds are dominated by strong interest supply examples both of the stronger and of the weaker forms of relation. Objects lying outside the focus of interest, as, for example, our own respiration and the firelight when we are engaged upon an absorbing game of chess, are in a certain sense related to the objects within the focus and to each other, since they are all present to our single consciousness. But the relations attaching to these outlying objects are much weaker than those between the sequence of acts by which the chess-player attempts to checkmate his adversary. The relation which is generated by the execution of purposes is the best and strongest kind of relation; and thus we may say that relation *par excellence* is teleological. On

the other hand, relation is weak when thoughts succeed each other at random, as in dreamy purposeless reverie.

Now the Eternal Consciousness as described by Green is not teleological: it is not said to unify the world because of some pervading purpose, but merely because every part of the world must be regarded as present to it. For all that we are told to the contrary, the relations constituted by the Eternal Consciousness might be of the weakest kind, as weak as those constituted by a consciousness which merely feels. That a feeling-consciousness suffices to constitute relation we learn from passages of the *Prolegomena*. "Feeling," Green says, "constitutes the unity of the individual soul. The individual animal is not merely one for us, who contemplate the connection between the members organic to its life. It is one in itself, as no material atom or material compound is, in virtue of the common feeling through which, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it" (§ 119). Thus feeling, he continues, constitutes individuality, though it does not "amount to the full individuality of man" (§ 120). But, since elements which are held in conscious unity and belong to an individual must thereby stand in relations, it is obvious that relation can be constituted by a consciousness which does not rise to the level of self-consciousness. Moreover, it would not be easy to say how low down in the scale of consciousness we might go before we came to an organism which could not be

said to constitute relation between its sentient parts: even the consciousness of the oyster, which we may assume for the sake of argument to be purely sensitive, must be admitted to be a principle of relation. Hence I do not see why a non-purposive universal relating consciousness should necessarily be of higher quality than the oyster's. Such a suggestion Green of course would have repelled with horror: he always speaks of the Eternal Consciousness as possessing in absolute plenitude all the predicates that we can conceive to belong to a subject. We have, however, to take account, not of what Green wanted the universal relating consciousness to be, but of what his argument entitles it to be.

It follows from this that a universal relating consciousness can make no approach to holiness. Holiness in human experience is an active quality, a consecration of one's powers and faculties to a perfectly good system of purposes. Its primary condition is therefore wanting in the Eternal Consciousness. And thus it would be superfluous to recapitulate the argument of Mr. Balfour that a bare principle of unity is "no fitting object of either love, reverence, or devotion."<sup>1</sup>

§ 19. In regard to the World of Nature the business of the ethical metaphysician is to show that it is adapted for a sphere of moral action. Some philosophers have attempted to prove a much closer adaptation than others; but the irreducible

<sup>1</sup> *Foundations of Belief*, part ii. chap. ii. § 3. Cf. H. Sidgwick's *Lectures*, p. 13.

minimum is that moral action is at least possible in the realm of nature. Now Green's static intellectualism precludes him from even this. This is plain at the outset if Green really meant to reduce Nature to a web of relations, which is doubtful. For, as energy is surely more than a relation, reduction of Nature to relations must exclude all energy from it, and thereby make it unfit as a field upon which moral energy can operate. But this objection need not be pressed: in any case it is included in what follows. For, if Green is right in his contention that "whatever anything is really it is unalterably" (§ 25), there can be no question of energy: however things may seem to move, they must in reality be perfectly static. Now a perfectly static Nature is no sphere for moral endeavour. Much endeavour is expended on attempting to ameliorate the material conditions of human life—Green himself did a good deal in the city of Oxford. But how did he reconcile his practical philanthropy with his doctrine of the unalterableness of the real?

This doctrine is put forward so plainly and prominently in the *Prolegomena* that it is impossible to explain it away; but, needless to say, Green was never alive to the absurdities I have deduced from it. He thought it was necessitated by his analysis of knowledge, and never went on to consider how far it was tenable for ethics. It is only one instance of the difficulties into which he puts himself by adoption of Kantian views. Kant's doctrine of the ultimate unreality of time is harmless because of his distinc-

tion between the phenomenal and the noumenal: time is real for phenomena, and it is phenomena alone that count effectively. Green rejects the great Kantian distinction; he will not hear of the unreality of the world we know: and yet he keeps to the unreality of time or change which is absolutely inexpellable from human or phenomenal experience. Possibly Hegel also may have influenced him to adopt the static view; though the Hegelian denial of change is bound up with a panlogism which Green never seriously contemplated adopting.

§ 20. We have now to criticise Green's metaphysic and psychology of the human self. It was a matter of deepest interest to him to vindicate what a Christian theist would call the Sonship of Man; and he believed that he made a basis for this by arguing that human consciousness is a reproduction of the Eternal Consciousness under the limitations of the human body. But in his account of this reproduction there are at least two very serious difficulties. The first concerns the act of reproduction. I admit that every theory of the Sonship of Man leaves it at bottom a mystery; Green is not to be blamed because he cannot tell us how it comes to pass: but his view of the timelessness of the Eternal Consciousness introduces a quite special difficulty. How is it possible that the Eternal Consciousness should perform an act of reproduction which by hypothesis leaves itself quite unchanged? It is only another aspect of the same difficulty that for a universal relating consciousness there is no

motive to reproduce itself in man. It may be that, as Green puts it, "the old question why God made the world has never been answered nor will be" (§ 100): but the question becomes a little less unapproachable if we think of God as a source of energy. We may not know why He made the world; but, since it is proper to power to display itself, the making of the world is appropriate to a God of power. But a static Deity, a changeless consciousness whose function it is to be the sustainer of changeless relations, cannot be imagined to reproduce itself in finite consciousnesses or otherwise.

The second difficulty lies in understanding what it is that is reproduced. If it is only the 'synthetic unity of apperception,' then that has no significance for morals: if it is the empirical self, there is an unbridgeable chasm between the reproducer and the reproduced; for one is timeless and the other a creature of time. This difficulty drives Green to the strange position that, though man's consciousness is single and indivisible, it "cannot be comprehended in a single conception. In seeking to understand its reality we have to look at it from two different points of view; and the different conceptions that we form of it, as looked at from these different points, do not admit of being united, any more than do our impressions of opposite sides of the same shield" (§ 68). But in this passage Green surely is using an illustration that does not illustrate. There is no difficulty whatever in uniting into one simultaneous presentation our *tactual* im-



pressions of the two sides of the same shield: our *visual* impressions cannot be so united, because our eyes are so set in our heads that we can only look at the two sides alternately. The visual impressions, however, can be united, in the sense of being joined on to one another successively, by running the eye from one side of the shield over to the other across the rim. But no process of juncture is possible with Green's two conceptions of human consciousness. On the one side there stands the undoubtedly real empirical self which Green, with gratuitous concession to naturalism, speaks of as "a function of the animal organism" (§ 67); on the other there is the alleged timeless reproduction of the Eternal Consciousness. Green should show us how to join the one on to the other; but the passage just quoted is in substance an admission that they are incompatible.

§ 21. The incompatibility between these two conceptions of the human self, the empirical and the timeless, is indeed so acute that it ends in the former, which is real, being practically ousted by the latter, which is unreal. Green always treats the timeless self as alone significant for ethics, and relegates the empirical self to the ambiguous position of a passive "vehicle" for the other (§ 67). It is this doctrine of Green's, that the human self in its reality is changeless, that has come in for the sharpest censure at the hands of his critics.<sup>1</sup> By it

<sup>1</sup> E.g. Prof. A. E. Taylor, *Problem of Conduct*, chap. ii.; Mr. Schiller, *Humanism*, p. 212; and Mr. Bradley, *A.A.*, p. 114.

he has laid himself open to the formidable accusation of having created an "epistemological monstrosity" or "psychological monster"; and it certainly does lead him to say some absurd things, as that human self-consciousness has no beginning in time, "because it never was not" (§ 114). It is Kant's influence, as usual, that has led him astray. The exigencies of system made Kant put an absolute separation between the 'I think' and the manifold of sense. Now Green, arguing against the naturalists and their conception of consciousness as an ever-changing stream, rightly insists that the synthetic sweep of mental vision which surveys the stream of events must be something more than a portion of them. And as time is correlative to the stream of change, consciousness may be spoken of as neutralising time (§ 65). So far Green is in accord with facts. But, unfortunately, Kant's example led him on to make an absolute separation between the synthetic consciousness and the empirical stream, and to say that the synthetic consciousness is changeless or out of time entirely. This outrage upon facts is not really demanded by his system. His point that a consciousness of change differs from a process of change would have been sufficiently established by pointing out the *relative* timelessness of the act of knowledge.

§ 22. From this treatment of the empirical self we are led on to speak of the difficulties attending Green's view of the motives impelling men to action. His main formula, which he develops at great length, is that the motive to action is in

every case the agent's conception of a good which will give him self-satisfaction on the whole (book II. chap. i. *passim*). This is the *Summum Bonum*, and the point on which Green insists most positively is that it cannot be sensuous.

"The motive in every imputable act for which the agent is conscious on reflection that he is answerable, is a desire for personal good in some form or other; and, however much the idea of what the personal good for the time is may be affected by the pressure of animal want, this want is no more a part or component of the desire than is the sensation of light or colour, which I receive in looking at this written line, a component part of my conception in reading it" (§ 91).

This accords with his treatment of the empirical self in respect of cognition; where he argues that, because there is in human nature a principle which is more than animal, it follows that man who is capable of knowledge "is not an animal, not a link in the chain of natural becoming, in part any more than at all" (§ 79).

If Green had stopped at this point his position would have been consistent though absurd: both knowledge and action would have been cut off from sense-experience altogether; and, on this doctrine, hunger would be no part of the motive which causes a tramp to steal a loaf of bread. But it is plain that the *summum bonum* as thus defined is an empty form, quite incapable of influencing concrete human action. Green in some degree recognised this, and in one passage, making gratuitous concession to naturalism, attributes all the "content," all the "filling" of

active self-consciousness to the impulses of "sentient and appetitive life" (§ 120). Thus it is plain that Green wished to find a place for sense-experience in the motives impelling men to action, but equally plain that he never reached an adequate formula. In his anxiety to make a clear distinction between animal want and human motive, he first adopts an interpretation of the *summum bonum* which cuts them entirely asunder; and then, in an indefinite fashion, tries to bring them together again.

We may note in passing how, when Green comes to speak of desire, he forgets his doctrine of the changelessness of the self derived from analysis of knowledge. The general form of human motive, he argues, is self-satisfaction, that is, every action is motived by desire. Hence it follows that every action, at least so far as successful, involves a change in the acting self—change from a less satisfied to a more satisfied state.

§ 23. In his treatment of freedom Green challenges criticism to the full. So far my criticism has mainly taken the form of the cross-examination which brings forward neglected facts and asks how the theory accounts for them. But moral freedom was one of the problems which Green explicitly undertook; and, as the requirements of the moral consciousness on this head are well recognised, we have a plain and admitted issue before us. It does not augur well for his success that he drew so much on Germany: the intellectualism of the great German idealists inclines them against free-

will. Kant's freedom, confined as it is to the noumenal sphere, is quite nugatory; and Hegel, with his substitution of logical for mechanical necessity, advocates a 'soft' determinism which is no more satisfactory to the moral consciousness than the 'harder' and more outspoken variety of the mechanicians.

The freedom which Green establishes by his analysis of knowledge must be described as merely formal. His argument runs as follows. The human consciousness, as a reproduction of the Eternal, is a source of relations and therefore not subject to them; and, as time is a relation, it is a condition of time and not conditioned by it (§ 74). But phenomenal determination is essentially a time-process; its meaning is just the invariable sequence of one phenomenal event upon another (§ 75). Thus the human consciousness cannot be subject to phenomenal determination; it is "not a link in the chain of natural becoming" (§ 82); it stands outside the casual sequence of phenomena. Such is his very Kantian refutation of determinism: so far he makes little, if any, advance upon 'noumenal freedom.'

But, when Green came to explain desire, this purely formal treatment had to be somewhat modified. He must have felt the difficulties attending the conception of a timeless satisfaction of desire: he had to study the question recognising that the human self works and is worked upon in the empirical world. His conclusions, however, are

entirely negative. He merely insists, on the one hand, against the pleasure-and-pain determinists that human motives, even when connected with physical wants, are not the same as animal motives, which ought more properly to be called instincts or impulses (§§ 91, 120): on the other hand against *liberum arbitrium indifferentiae* (a quite unwarranted perversion of true libertarianism) he argues that all actions are, in a sense, necessary, and that there is no such thing as unmotivated willing (§§ 99, 110). Here he stops. He understands in some degree the demand of the moral consciousness for freedom to create ideals and freedom to carry them into practice; but he offers nothing to satisfy it. There is nothing satisfactory in such static-epistemological formulae as that man is free "in virtue of his character as knowing" (§ 74), or as self-distinguishing (§ 82), or as self-objectifying (§ 112). And, when he comes to treat of active doing, it is evident that he believed in true free-will (§ 107), just as he believed in theism; but it is equally plain that he never found an adequate philosophic formula for it. Some of his expressions even seem to surrender the case to the determinists (§ 87).<sup>1</sup>

§ 24. The idol of Subjectivism, the influence of which on Green's works I will now attempt to trace, is, in both its forms, really as much alien as intellectualism to his deepest convictions. Solipsism is one of the standard objects of his polemic: his

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the criticism in Sidgwick's *Lectures*, pp. 15 *seq.*



sober and practical spirit had no kinship with the philosophy of shadows. He always protested that his "idealism which interprets facts as relations and can only understand relations as constituted by a single spiritual principle" has nothing in common with the Humian "reduction of facts to feelings."

"Its very basis is the consciousness of objectivity. Its whole aim is to articulate coherently the conviction of there being a world of abiding realities other than, and determining, the endless flow of our feelings. The source of its differences from ordinary realism lies in its being less easily satisfied in its analysis of what the existence of such a world implies" (§ 37).

With the Hegelian or impersonal subjectivism parts of the *Prolegomena* have, as we shall see presently, no small affinity. But, on the other hand, his main ethical doctrine looks in quite another direction; in its recognition of finite existence generally and the rights of the individual human subject the tendency of the *Prolegomena* is quite irreconcilable with Hegelianism.

§ 25. In spite of Green's desire for a philosophical theory which should recognise to the full the trans-subjective existence of objects, there is a very strong solipsistic turn in his treatment of Perception. In the passage dealing with this topic (§§ 58-65) he is preoccupied with the thought that the object of knowledge has no existence independent of consciousness. In pressing this point he uses expressions which give us to understand that the object perceived is never outside the consciousness of the



perceiver.<sup>1</sup> He argues that, though perception is connected with sensation, which is explicable by external impact, it is mere confusion to identify the perceived object with the exciting cause of sensation, and that this confusion leads to an extrusion of the perceived object from consciousness (§ 59). He seems to pass from the proposition that objects can only exist *for* consciousness to the proposition that objects can only exist *in* consciousness. And thus he never makes it clear in what sense, if any, the object is more than a 'thing in our minds,' or what objectivity is beyond being a special characteristic of the contents of our subjective world.

§ 26. The motive which induced Green to treat perception in this solipsistic way was to disprove the existence of anything objective which is not spiritual, and thereby to forestall objections to his well-known doctrine of the Spiritual Principle in Nature. It is in this latter doctrine that he makes approach to the Impersonal Subjectivism of Hegel. The steps by which he reaches it have already come under our notice, and it will be enough to recapitulate them briefly. Reality, he says, can have no other meaning but that of a system of relations; nature, therefore, is, not an aggregate of things-in-themselves, but a system of relations. Now relations imply a relating-consciousness: "it is only for

<sup>1</sup> Green remarks (§ 60) that we can speak with propriety neither of "outside" nor of "inside" consciousness, since these are relations and, consciousness being the source of relation, the relation of externality cannot exist between the individual consciousness and anything else. But by such reasoning we could prove that the individual consciousness can stand in no relations at all; whence it would follow that we could say nothing about it.

a thinking consciousness that such relations [as we find in nature] can subsist" (§ 51). And, therefore, as it is obvious that only a small part of nature is at any given time present to finite consciousness, it follows that the relations of the totality of nature are constituted by a cosmic or Eternal Consciousness. This is the Spiritual Principle in Nature.

It will conduce to the understanding of this doctrine if we inquire what is its relation to Hegel? Hegel says that nature is part of the Universal Subject; Green says that nature as relational is constituted by the Universal Subject. But what exactly does this last mean? It is impossible to give a perfectly confident answer, because Green never states clearly how the Universal Subject or Spiritual Principle is related to nature; but apparently he meant that nature is constituted as a reality by its presence to the Universal Consciousness. To speak in popular language, for Hegel nature is real because part of God's mind; for Green nature is real because present to God's mind. Close as this seems to Hegel, it is not Hegelianism; here, no less than elsewhere, I doubt the common classification which reckons Green as a member of that school. In the most Hegelian passage of the *Prolegomena* where he speaks of "the concrete whole, which may be described indifferently as an eternal intelligence realised in the related facts of the world, or as a system of related facts rendered possible by such an intelligence" (§ 36), he, rather

unhistorically, attributes the *Weltanschauung* thus implied, not to Hegel but to Kant.

§ 27. But leaving this historical question aside, let us consider how far Green's doctrine of the Spiritual Principle in Nature is adequate for his purposes. Its want of definition makes criticism itself somewhat halting and uncertain; but I believe that Green intended by means of the doctrine to establish the following points: that there exists a "world of abiding realities" which does not consist of 'things-in-themselves' either in the Kantian or in the materialistic sense; that this objectively real world has a spirituality which is parallel to the spirituality of man; and that, above all, it is in virtue of this parallelism that we can regard the spiritual principle in man as a reproduction of the Spiritual Principle in Nature. Let us take these points in order.

Green's discussion of perception which aims at disproving the existence of 'things-in-themselves' points, as we have seen, towards solipsism and the abolishing of objective reality altogether. It is the aim of the doctrine of the Spiritual Principle in Nature to re-establish the belief in objective reality upon a surer foundation. But can it be re-established thus? Green's argument is that the existence of a "world of abiding realities" is guaranteed by its presence to the mind of God. But a moment's thought suffices to show that it is not presence to the mind of God that makes the world abidingly real for man. When Green speaks of nature, or

the relational element in nature, as constituted by the Spiritual Principle, he must, I take it, be speaking of nature as it is known to man; he cannot mean nature-in-itself, if there be such a thing. Now nature-as-known-to-man is real for each individual man mainly by reason of its presence to his personal consciousness; for each man the objective reality thus personally verified forms the nucleus of the objective world. Beyond this nucleus there is a vast peripheral tract of reality not thus verified; and the question is how this peripheral tract is for each man constituted as real. The answer, surely, is by presence to the consciousnesses of other members of his society. A relation may exist between an electric wire and a chemical solution which is beyond the observation of a non-scientific person; but he may treat it as real by reason of its presence to the consciousness of a man of science. But, in order that what is real for another's consciousness may be real for one's own, it is necessary that the other consciousness should be within what may be called one's universe of conversation. Relations which may be present to the consciousness of a dweller in the planet Mars have not, by virtue of that presence, any reality for dwellers on the Earth. And the same limitation applies in some measure to consciousnesses which stand at very different levels, as of those of a scientist and a savage: they stand too far apart to co-operate to the full in constituting reality. These considerations are applicable to the divine consciousness in its

relation to man. If Green had wished to maintain that relations are, by reason of their presence to God's mind, real for men, he should have proved that God can enter the human 'universe of conversation': God must talk to and act upon men after the manner of the Old Testament. Now this, of course, Green never dreamt of maintaining; but nothing less could suffice for the re-establishment of his "world of abiding realities" from the standpoint which he assumes. And, even if Green had adopted this extreme position, a further difficulty would have had to be met: it would have been necessary to explain why, if the divine consciousness constitutes reality for men, men share so scantily in the wealth of the divine experience.

§ 28. Let us pass now to the second point, and inquire in what sense reality would be spiritual even if it were constituted for us by the divine consciousness. Consider any ordinary relation constituted by human consciousness, say that between one's pen and one's inkstand. Such a relation may in a certain sense be called spiritual because a spirit constitutes it; but it is not spiritual as the subjective spirit is spiritual. There is an impassable difference between subjective spirituality and what may be called objective spirituality, just as there is between the subjective intelligence of an inventor and the intelligence which is objectively embodied in his machine. Spirituality in the latter sense is like the spirituality which is proved by the ordinary 'argument from design.' Both Green's argument and

the design-argument, if successful, prove that there is spirituality in nature, but they do not prove that nature is spirit. This illustrates once more Green's divergence from Hegel. The reader will understand that I take this divergence as illustration of Green's philosophic sanity: it really is absurd to say that one's pen is part of the mind of God. But we must remember that, if this really was Green's position, he cannot be allowed the advantage of the Hegelian impersonal subjectivism in his doctrine of the Sonship of Man.

Green's doctrine of the Sonship of Man has been touched upon already (*supra* §§ 17, 20), and certain grave difficulties attending it have been indicated: we cannot understand how or why the Eternal Consciousness reproduces itself, or what element of human nature it is that is reproduced. But what really lends plausibility to the doctrine of reproduction is the alleged parallelism of the Spiritual Principle in nature with the Spiritual Principle in man. It is plain that Green was trying to secure the advantages without the disadvantages of Hegelianism. The Hegelian who regards the universe as homogeneously spiritual throughout has no difficulty in treating human spirits as reproductions of the Absolute: the difficulty is to see how there can be room for finite spirits. Green, viewing the universe not as subject but as constituted by a Subject, makes room for finite spirits: but therewith the parallelism ceases, and the plausibility of reproduction is impaired. An old-fashioned philosopher



who by means of the 'argument from design' has established the existence of an intelligent Author of nature, might argue that this intelligence is reproduced in man; and to an argument of this kind Green is entitled, but he is not entitled to more.

Thus it cannot be said that Green has turned the tables upon naturalism. If he had been justified in maintaining that there is the closest parallelism between nature unified and constituted by the Eternal Consciousness and man unified and constituted by human consciousness, he could have assented with equanimity to the naturalistic doctrine that man is a product of nature; or rather, he could have substituted for that doctrine his own formula which lays it down that

"the concrete whole, which may be described indifferently as an eternal intelligence realised in the related facts of the world or as a system of related facts rendered possible by such an intelligence, partially and gradually reproduces itself in us, communicating piecemeal, but in inseparable correlation, understanding and the facts understood, experience and the experienced world" (§ 36).

But, as no such parallelism can be established, the advantage, such as it may be, of this counter-stroke upon naturalism must be foregone.

And, indeed, the loss is perhaps not so serious after all. Attractive in some ways as Green's doctrine of Reproduction may be, I doubt if it satisfies the religious consciousness so well as the teaching of ordinary theism. The ordinary theist would argue, not unreasonably, that to speak of parallelism detracts from the incomprehensible



superiority of the world-consciousness; he would maintain that, if we can speak at all of the divine consciousness as reproduced in the human, the reproduction is infinitesimal in degree.

§ 29. We turn now to Green's theory of moral action, where also the bias of subjectivism is traceable. The theory may be summarised as follows:—The general form of moral action is that it is an effort to satisfy desire, which is always for some personal good, that is, for some conscious state of the agent that is anticipated as satisfying (§§ 86, 91). By virtue of his self-consciousness the human agent has the unique capacity of forming to himself the conception of a good-upon-the-whole, *i.e.*, of an all-inclusive summum bonum of which any particular good is but the partial and temporary expression (§§ 85, 90, 128, 354). In every human motive this conception of a summum bonum makes itself felt. When Esau sold his birthright for pottage his motive, strictly expressed, was not hunger but a "conception of himself as finding for the time his greatest good in the satisfaction of hunger" (§ 96). The good man is one who has a true conception of the summum bonum; whereas the bad man has a false conception. But virtuous and vicious men alike must, as human agents, form some conception of the summum bonum and act with reference to it (§§ 99, 115). The vicious man differs from the virtuous precisely in supposing that his good lies in such conduct as from man's nature cannot possibly lead to the good (§ 178).

In the chapter on subjectivism I attempted to show how the denial of objective reality tends to throw the moralist on some form of self-seeking for the explanation of morality. So, at least, it is with Green. His 'self-realisation' is really of kindred nature to the egoistic hedonism which he attacks so vigorously; they are both species of self-regarding ethics. It seems as if Green had accepted from Aristotle the view that morality is concerned with desire, which is always for a good; and as if he had, like Kant, accepted the reasoning of the naturalists that every good must be some state of the agent's consciousness anticipated as satisfying. He only differs from them in asserting that the anticipated satisfaction is not pleasure.

§ 30. The self-regarding interpretation of morality, and in particular that form of it expressed by the phrase self-realisation, has so great a body of support that it would be impolitic to attempt a cursory criticism. I can only assert my conviction that a truer interpretation would be one keeping more closely to the disinterested-benevolence doctrine of Hume and the 'moral sense' of Hutcheson. Such an interpretation would recognise that, for morality, the interest which the subject feels in *objects* is more important than the interest which he feels in *himself*. Although the latter half of the *Prolegomena* shows a welcome inclination towards this line of thought, in the former half Green's explanation of the functions of the ego is very reflexive. He speaks of it as "self-seeking and self-realising"

(§ 100), "self-presenting" (§ 101), "conscious of itself as its own object and thus self-determined" (§ 102, cf. § 112), "self-distinguishing" (§ 112), and "self-objectifying" (§ 175). However, the further he proceeds with the book the more he extricates himself from the subjectivist circle. He does this by adopting tacitly a sort of doctrine of 'heterogony of ends' resembling the 'law of transference' of the association moralists. In one section the "quest of self-satisfaction" (§ 160) is still paramount and objective interests are ancillary: "ordinary motives" are "interests in the attainment of objects without which it seems to the man in his actual state that he cannot satisfy himself" (§ 160). But in the next section objects have attached the main interest to themselves, and self-satisfaction has dropped into the background. "Benevolent desires terminate upon their objects, upon the benefits done to others" (§ 161). Henceforward we hear continually of objective interest in ever widening forms, "interests as of a person in persons" (§ 201), "interests ranging from provision for family to the improvement of the public health or to the production of a system of philosophy" (§ 234), "interest in moral qualities as such" (§ 243), "interest of which the object is a common good" (§ 283). It is this latter line of ethical interpretation, I believe, which has brought the third book of the *Prolegomena* so much into favour; but Green never shows how it is to be reconciled with the subjectivist doctrine to which he adheres in form all through.

§ 31. But the main proof that Green's insight was superior to his system is to be drawn from what he says of the moral nature of God. He argues that the moral relation of man to God is exactly parallel to the intellectual relation; in both the knowledge and the morality of mankind the eternal self-conscious Subject is reproducing itself under human limitations (§§ 99, 174). In God human potentialities are perfected; he realises the ideal of holiness (§§ 173, 187, 192, 302), he is therefore the consummation of virtue, the source of virtuous effort, and the ideal of virtuous aspiration (§ 302).

The nobility of these conceptions must not blind us to their inconsistency with Green's main ethical theory. We must remember that, when the form of all moral activity is regarded as the quest of self-satisfaction, the element of love or charity can exist there only by accident. To the self-satisfaction moralist it is logically an accident that man is social and can only satisfy himself by taking interest in society and its members (cf. §§ 199, 370, 375): were it possible for man isolated to get self-satisfaction, there would be no need for the social element at all. Assuming that spiders have a higher intelligence than we believe them to possess, we should, on Green's subjectivist view, be forced to admit that the most unsociable of spiders may be perfectly virtuous because perfectly self-satisfied.

Now evidently we have no reason to think that the causes which necessitate a social element in human self-satisfaction operate upon God: it is

presumptuous to assert that God cannot obtain self-satisfaction without taking man into partnership with him. Aristotle, who put the highest virtue in a form of self-satisfaction, was much more logical in separating God from altruistic interests altogether. And if the divine virtue consists in perfect self-satisfaction it cannot act as a stimulant to moral aspiration in man. When another man has attained a satisfaction which we are seeking, he becomes an object of emulation to us, and we may be comforted by the practical assurance of the attainability of the satisfaction; but this only holds good as between man and man, and not as between man and God. Nor indeed is Green ever thinking of a stimulus of this kind: he is thinking of the stimulus of disinterested admiration for the highest type of character. But for another being's self-satisfaction we never profess admiration except ironically: we may envy him for having attained the *summum bonum*; but we hardly venerate him.

§ 32. Nor is there the slightest propriety in speaking of the satisfaction of one being as reproducing itself in another. The only sense at all in which this is possible is by sympathy, according to the explanation of Adam Smith; but this is not in question here. As regards its direct experience enjoyment is the most incommunicable thing in the world. Nor is it easy to suggest any reason why an enjoyment of the *summum bonum* experienced by God should be reproduced in man.

This brief indication of the absurdity of these

ethical positions when interpreted strictly is sufficient, for it is plain that Green never meant to interpret them strictly. He never carries through his thesis that the form of all morality is the quest of self-satisfaction. The altruistic sentiments which should logically be ancillary to self-satisfaction soon become for him the foremost part of moral experience. He thinks of virtue, not as self-satisfaction, but as a settled habit of active benevolence. It is the divine charity which, as in ordinary Christian theism, becomes the object of man's veneration; and it is charity, not self-satisfaction, which is reproduced in man from God.

§ 33. In the foregoing pages of criticism I have tried to point out, not only the weakness in Green, but also the sources of his strength. And, in judging the weak parts, we must not forget that the *Prolegomena*, in which all Green's system is contained, was a posthumous and, indeed, an unfinished work. Apart from certain fundamentals Green was a hesitating, irresolute, one might almost say a timorous, thinker, the sort of mind that is easily nonplussed by objections from a critical pupil.<sup>1</sup> The views which he urged against the philosophy of the lower categories he held unshakably, because convinced of their truth by long and painful consideration and reconsideration. But there is nothing to show that he would have held with equal tenacity to the constructive metaphysic of the *Prolegomena*.

<sup>1</sup> I owe this to an anecdote from the President of Corpus.

In any case it is certain that in the later chapters of the *Prolegomena* we find less and less of the idols that have done him so much disservice. What he has to say of the personal character of the moral ideal, of the extension of the area of common good, of the place of objective interest in a good life (see esp. § 228), of the development from the Greek to the modern conception of virtue, of the practical value of the moral ideal and of the practical value of a theory of the moral ideal, is all admirable. The metaphysical system of the earlier part of the *Prolegomena* is ambitious and stimulating; but the ethical doctrines of the later part are truer, and give their author a claim to stand in the historic succession of British philosophy.



## CHAPTER IX

MR. F. H. BRADLEY

§ 1. THERE can be no doubt that Mr. Bradley, if he chose, could write a most interesting philosophical autobiography: the position he occupies at present is a remarkable one, and he has made no small journey in reaching it. His first book, *Ethical Studies* (1876), shows him taking up Hegelianism by reaction against the lower-categories philosophy then generally prevalent in English thought: in his last he has come to something not unlike Spinozism; though his interest in the Absolute is very different from the scientific, self-contained, anti-sensuous mysticism of Spinoza.

It follows from these relationships that Mr. Bradley's work is both intellectualist and absolutist. It is his advocacy of the Absolute that is the better known; but his intellectualism is the more important for all the positive features of his doctrine. Absolutism, as we know, does not go far as a principle of explanation; it is rather a principle that suppresses explanation: but the intellectualism with which Mr. Bradley began his career has left abundant traces on his more constructive work all through.

§ 2. His *Ethical Studies* has the brilliancy and something of the immaturity of youth. Its preface shows clearly enough the object which the author had set before him: being profoundly dissatisfied with what he calls the one-sidedness and dogmatism of English moral philosophy, he desired to introduce a "fresh element" into "the chaos of our philosophical literature" (*E.S.* p. 6). By the "fresh element" Mr. Bradley means, as the closing words of his preface show, the principles of Hegel, then rather more than half a century old, but up to that time not duly taken account of by English thinkers. To Hegelianism Mr. Bradley refers not obscurely at the end of his first 'Study,' where he bids us remember that

"we live in an island, and that our national mind, if we do not enlarge it, may also grow insular; that not far from us there lies (they say so) a world of thought, which, with all its variety, is neither one nor the other of our two philosophies, but whose battle is the battle of philosophy itself against two undying and opposite one-sidednesses; a philosophy which *thinks* what the vulgar *believe*; a philosophy, lastly, which we all have refuted, and, having so cleared our consciences, which some of us at least might take steps to understand."

Very significant is the tone, even more than the content, of the foregoing extract as showing the attitude of many forward-looking minds at that time. Thirty years ago Hegel was read but little over here, and understood still less: no one could be sure what a better understanding of him might not do for British philosophy. Such a passage could not be written now when most people understand

pretty well how much, or how little, we have to hope from Hegel.

§ 3. The main interest of *Ethical Studies*, apart from its witty polemic against the traditional English philosophy, is that it forms a good example of the position taken by Anglo-Hegelians to their master. Mr. Bradley never adopts the two essential doctrines of Hegel, the Thought-Absolute and the Dialectic. At a later date we find him writing of Hegel, "I cannot say that I have mastered his system" (*P.L.* p. vi.); and it is quite possible that, all along, difficulties of interpretation may have prevented him from defining his position with regard to that master. But a careful perusal of *Ethical Studies* shows that Mr. Bradley, from the first, must have felt that Hegelianism would not 'do,' and must have shared the common feeling among Anglo-Hegelians that there were insuperable objections to its systematic acceptance. Nevertheless, he adopts much of the results and general tendency of Hegel. Mr. Bradley's 'soft' determinism, his magnification of society and belittlement of the individual, his sneers at conscience and reverence for the social 'ethos,' his invective against the 'false' infinite, and, in particular, his doctrines of the real or concrete universal and of the social will have all an unmistakable provenance.

§ 4. It is worth while to pause a moment over Mr. Bradley's references to the 'universal,' because they illustrate, I think, a peculiar weakness of the Anglo-Hegelian position. The references are

scattered all through *Ethical Studies*: Mr. Bradley explains the "most widely spread amongst all men's rooted beliefs" about human action by the doctrine "that an universal is real, and that that universal is conscious of itself" (p. 31); he suggests that we may regard the "unity of the two factors" in volition as "the individual whole, or again the concrete universal" (p. 66); the "concrete and real universal makes the morality, which does exist, possible in theory as well as real in fact" (p. 105); he repudiates asceticism as "the tyranny of the (abstract) universal" (p. 125); the fault of the doctrine of 'duty for duty's sake' is that "for mere particular it substitutes mere universal" (p. 128); true morality is "something like a universal," whereas "happiness, as the effort to construct that universal by the addition of particulars, gave us a futile and bastard product, which carried its self-destruction within it, in the continual assertion of its own universality, together with its unceasing actual particularity and finitude" (p. 145); the goodwill "is a concrete universal, because it not only is above but is within and throughout its details" (p. 147); he recommends "my station and its duties" by the argument that "in that the universal is concrete" (p. 159); and asserts that "the right and duty of gaining self-realisation through the real universal is still as certain as is the impossibility of gaining it otherwise" (p. 173).

Now I would argue that a philosopher should not play fast and loose with such a doctrine as the

Concrete Universal. In Hegel it has a definite sense and is an integral part of his system; Dr. Stirling even calls it, rather mistakenly I should say, the secret of Hegel. A writer who uses it should either define it for himself, or else be understood to accept the full Hegelian position. Mr. Bradley certainly gives no definition, and does not even hint at one; while the rest of his book with its large indebtedness to Aristotle and common-sense, not to mention the religious mysticism at its close, is quite incompatible with systematic Hegelianism. Now this is quite characteristic of Anglo-Hegelian writers: all through we find them, while declining the Hegelian system, offering in philosophical explanation terms and doctrines which are meaningless outside the Hegelian system.

§ 5. The main ethical doctrine of *Ethical Studies*, "my station and its duties" is another illustration of this illegitimate borrowing. It is said by its author to depend on the principle that "when we will morally, the will of the objective world wills itself in us, and carries both us and itself out into the world of the moral will, which is its own realm" (p. 162). Now this objective will, elsewhere termed "objective mind" (p. 167), is a Hegelism which means a whole system if it means anything.

However, this question of origin may be passed by; a more profitable matter of discussion is the claim of the station-and-duties doctrine to be an adequate interpretation of moral experience. To my mind its fatal defect consists in overlooking the

individual's part of choosing his station and of interpreting its duties in his own way. To take station-and-duties as the supreme moral category implies, firstly, that each man has what Mr. Bradley calls an "appointed function" (p. 164). Now this phrase is misleading: our higher functions are not appointed, but self-appointed. And this ought to be particularly obvious in a university, where the choice of careers goes on daily before our eyes and could, surely, be illustrated most copiously from Mr. Bradley's personal observation. Moreover the doctrine implies that a man's station sets forth to him his duties in adequate prescription; whereas it is notorious that the duties are prescribed only in the most general terms, so that a man's function is pretty well what he chooses to make it. To say that the objective mind "speaks the word of command and gives the field of accomplishment, and in the activity of obedience it has and bestows individual life and satisfaction and happiness" (p. 167), is to over-estimate considerably the moral direction which the individual gets from society. We need not press against Mr. Bradley his phrase of 'the will of the objective world willing itself in us:' for, if we did, it would mean the merging of personal volition altogether. We may take it as an extreme and incautious expression of Mr. Bradley's reaction against the equally extreme individualism of our traditional moral and political philosophy.

§ 6. Very interesting in view of later developments is the religious mysticism of the "Concluding

Remarks" of the book. The end of Mr. Bradley's "Studies" brings him into distant view of a state "where morality is removed and survives in its fulfilment."

"The hunt after pleasure in any shape has proved itself a delusion, and the form of duty a snare, and the finite realisation of 'my station' was truth indeed, and a happiness that called to us to stay, but was too narrow to satisfy wholly the spirit's hunger; and ideal morality brought the sickening sense of inevitable failure. Here where we are landed at last, the process is at an end, though the best activity here first begins. Here our morality is consummated in oneness with God, and everywhere we find that 'immortal Love,' which builds itself for ever on contradiction, but in which the contradiction is eternally resolved" (p. 305).

All this points forward to *Appearance and Reality*.

§ 7. Mr. Bradley's second book, *The Principles of Logic* (1883), contains the main bulk of his constructive work; though, as dealing with a technical subject, it has attracted far less notice than *Appearance and Reality*. Its independent and elaborate treatment of logical questions, and its great influence upon study in this university, call for a somewhat detailed criticism: at the risk of taxing my readers' patience I will try to show the how and why of Mr. Bradley's shortcomings on the main questions of logic. Not that I mean seriously to offer apology for entering so far into detail: considering that logic is the staple of philosophical teaching in Oxford, we must confess to doing too little rather than too much in the detailed investigation of disputed logical problems.



The preface tells us that the work "makes no claim to supply any systematic treatment" (p. v.); it has, indeed, more the air of a voyage of discovery than of a statement of 'Principles.' This does not make for lucidity; but the main difficulty lies in the intricate cross-currents that pervade the work. There are people who hold that, in spite of the vigour and lucidity of its style, it is the most difficult English philosophical treatise that is worth the trouble of reading. After repeated perusal, however, it seems possible to discern the principles that account for its general form and for its remarkable failure to come to any definite conclusion. Quite in Mr. Bradley's regular manner, a sheaf of ultimate doubts and dilemmas closes the whole inquiry.

What any one can see is the shadow of the Passive Fallacy hanging over Mr. Bradley's whole conception of the function of thought and of its relation to reality. Mr. Bradley always speaks of reality as unalterably given, something that exercises compulsion upon thought, something to which thought is bound to conform (p. 40): he never recognises the function of thought in making and transforming reality.<sup>1</sup> It is possible I may be met here with the objection that the creative function of thought is psychological, and that its properly logical function is the recognition of existent reality which is forced upon its notice. To this I should

<sup>1</sup> Cf. especially his remarkable simile of the human mind to an intelligence *hung passively* over a river covered with drifting objects (p. 54).

answer that I deny the validity of the distinction between the logical and the psychological as thus laid down. The distinction is constantly made (*e.g.* in *P.L.* p. 21), but nowhere have I seen any clear justification of it. At any rate I do not believe it can be maintained in the present case. If logic is the theory of thought, and if, as I believe, the creative function of thought is important beyond every other, then that function cannot be extruded outside of logic.

Where Mr. Bradley's logical treatment seems to get at cross-purposes with itself is in his combination of intellectualism with an absolutism of the 'feeling' type. His adoption of the former is easily understood: in this book, as in *Ethical Studies*, Mr. Bradley is waging war against the lower-categories philosophy, and borrows from Germany weapons to fight the logic which would view the operations of thought as a kind of chemistry, or as mechanical association and resurrection of sensuous elements, or as the working of a specially complicated logical machine. His feeling-absolutism is no less intelligible as a reaction against the Hegelian panlogism. The difficulty comes when Mr. Bradley tries to work the two together: in almost every chapter these two incompatible strands of thought are interwoven with an intricacy to drive the most patient commentator near despair.

§ 8. The intellectualist bias which consists in ignoring the sensational element of knowledge appears most strikingly in his second chapter on

"The Categorical and Hypothetical Forms of Judgment." The long and formidable discussion thus entitled is designed apparently (I speak without much confidence) to cut the ground from under the sensationist logicians: while they hold that the whole matter of thought is sensational, Mr. Bradley contends that none of it is sensational and that all judgment is abstract. The sensationist interprets 'All men are mortal' as a categorical statement about material facts which may be sensuously verified: Mr. Bradley holds that such a judgment is not categorical, is not about material facts, and cannot be sensuously verified. He insists that the strictly correct formulation of 'All men are mortal' is 'If man then mortal.' "The universal judgment is thus always hypothetical. It says, '*Given* one thing you will *then* have another,' and it says no more. No truth can state fact" (p. 47).

§ 9. The great difficulty in the way of carrying out this doctrine thoroughly is, of course, what Mr. Bradley calls the singular judgment of sense, such as 'Here is a wolf'; and he admits that at a certain level of thought "the judgments that analyse what is given in perception will all be categorical" (p. 107). But in the second part of his second chapter he undertakes to show that on a stricter scrutiny such judgments are no less abstract and hypothetical than 'All men are mortal,' and differ only for the worse in expressing a lower degree of truth.

"The only hope for the singular judgment lies in complete renunciation. It must admit that the abstract, although hypothetical, is more true than itself is. It must ask for a place in the same class of judgment, and be content to take the lowest room there. It must cease to predicate its elements of the real, and must confine itself to asserting their connection as adjectives generally, and apart from particular existence. Instead of meaning by 'Here is a wolf' or 'This tree is green,' that 'wolf' and 'green tree' are real facts, it must affirm the general connection of wolf with elements of the environment, and of 'green' with 'tree.' And it must do this in an abstract sense, without any reference to the particular fact. In a low and rudimentary form it thus tends to become a scientific law, and, entirely giving up its original claims, it now sets its foot on the ladder of truth" (pp. 104 sq.).

§ 10. In this attack upon the judgment of sense Mr. Bradley is thinking, I presume, specially of J. S. Mill. Mill, in explaining his doctrine of the import of propositions (*System of Logic*, bk. i. chap. v. § 4), gives as the simplest example, "The summit of Chimborazo is white."

"The word white," he says, "connotes an attribute which is possessed by the individual object designated by the words 'summit of Chimborazo'; which attribute consists in the physical fact of its exciting in human beings the sensation which we call a sensation of white. It will be admitted," he adds, "that by asserting the proposition we wish to communicate information of that physical fact."

But this is just what Mr. Bradley refuses to admit; he denies the fundamental principle from which the sensationist logic takes its start.

In his proof that the judgment of sense is universal from the outset Mr. Bradley has obviously

borrowed from Hegel. In the *Phänomenologie des Geistes* (pp. 71-82) Hegel undertakes to prove that immediate sense-experience (*sinnliche Gewissheit*) gives us nothing but pure Being (*reines Seyn*). It is essential to his panlogist position that he should interpret sense-experience in this way: his whole philosophy collapses unless he can disprove the common opinion that sense-experience supplies us with concrete data, or with anything more than the emptiest and most abstract of universals. Mr. Bradley has not to face the same imperious necessity, and it is a blot upon his book that, to support his own position, which here is essentially different from Hegel's, he has adapted some of the flimsiest arguments of the *Phenomenology*.

§ 11. To examine these arguments in detail would be a long digression: I can only comment upon two points in Mr. Bradley's doctrine. The first is that in saying that "the real is inaccessible by way of ideas" (p. 63), or, in saying that ideas, being abstract, cannot indicate or be made applicable to concrete particulars, he is inflicting a monstrous disability upon thought. No specification of time or place, he argues, is sufficient to express the particular. "When we say 'It rained last Tuesday,' we mean *this* last Tuesday, and not any other; but, if we keep to ideas, we do not utter our meaning" (p. 62; cf. *Phan. d. Geistes*, p. 74). But, surely, in writing these words Mr. Bradley could hardly have realised their import. If we *cannot* utter our meaning how is it that we

still manage to do it? I give the order 'Light your candle,' and lo! in spite of the alleged universality of the enunciation, one particular candle is lit. The truth is, I suppose, that the separate elements of a sentence may be universal taken separately, and yet, in combination, may indicate a unique individual. 'Light,' 'your,' and 'candle' are severally terms which represent ideas, but put together, and taken in combination with attendant conditions that are part of the understood content of the command, they suffice to indicate a particular thing.

§ 12. The other comment I have to make refers to the difficulty of reconciling Mr. Bradley's doctrine of the abstractness and falsity of the perceptive judgment with what he says in the self-same chapter of sense-experience as our unique mode of contact with reality. This last is not an *obiter dictum* of Mr. Bradley's: it recurs all through the *Principles of Logic*, and is, as we shall see later, fundamentally connected with his feeling-absolutism. Present perception, he says, is the base from which our ideas of past and future are projected (p. 62); it is, so to speak, the one loophole through which we touch reality (p. 70). And yet we are told that this unique contact gives us nothing but the very poorest and falsest kind of universal: not till we get away from it to those hypotheticals which embody *laws* do we get into the world of science (p. 92). From these expressions of Mr. Bradley's we can only conclude that the nearer we are to reality the further we are from science. It is on the relation

of sense-experience to knowledge that the intricacy of thought in the *Principles of Logic* reaches for me its culminating point: the foregoing is but one of many difficulties that might be raised on this head were it profitable to do so.<sup>1</sup>

§ 13. In all he says about judgment Mr. Bradley ignores its active and creative side. This may be illustrated by his general definition: "Judgment proper is the act which refers an ideal content (recognised as such) to a reality beyond the act" (p. 10), and also by his doctrine that judgment is not true unless it is forced upon our minds by reality (p. 40). In other words Mr. Bradley's view of judgment is this: The judger has in his mind an ideal content; in judgment he asserts that reality possesses that content; and judges rightly or wrongly according as reality accepts or rejects the content. This account, it is obvious, holds good only of that knowledge in which we trace passively the features of reality; it is quite inapplicable to cases where we act upon reality. The simplest action, mending a quill-pen, for example, involves judgments in which we do not offer ideas to reality to accept or reject, but in which we impose ideas upon reality. Mr. Bradley gives no account of such judgments; this will be illustrated further when I come to speak of his doctrine of inference.

§ 14. This side of Mr. Bradley's intellectualism, his neglect of activity, purpose, and creation, receives

<sup>1</sup> The reader who wishes to go further into these very puzzling questions should consult Prof. Bosanquet's study of Mr. Bradley's views in *Knowledge and Reality*, especially chap. I. and the "Conclusion."



minor illustrations from his views of the Disjunctive Judgment (bk. i. chap. iv.), of the Quantity of Judgments, and of the Modality of Judgments (bk. i. chaps. vi., vii.).

In his treatment of disjunction, Mr. Bradley is quite right in refusing to make it a "mere appendage" or "simple application of the hypothetical" (p. 121), and in insisting that it is always partly categorical: where he goes wrong is in treating it entirely as a judgment of partial ignorance: 'Jones is in England or America' is Mr. Bradley's type of the disjunctive judgment (cf. p. 123). The disjunctive judgment, says Mr. Bradley,

"first takes a predicate known within limits, and defined by exclusion, and then further defines it by hypothetical exclusion. It rests on the assumption that we have the whole field, and by removing parts can determine the residue" (p. 130).

All this is true as far as it goes; but by stopping at this point Mr. Bradley has left out the most characteristic and valuable function of the disjunctive judgment, which is to define within limits a purpose or expected event. 'We are going to London next week or the week after'; 'He must either submit or resign,' are judgments to which Mr. Bradley's just-quoted formula is inadequate. Disjunctions of this kind indicate from an indefinite number of possible events two or more as likely to happen. In regard to the future it is absurd to say that "we have the whole field, and by removing parts can determine the residue"; for the "field" has not yet come into existence.

§ 15. In his chapter on the Quantity of Judgments, Mr. Bradley makes a useful attack on various superstitions of sensationist logic ; but in the most important part of the chapter, that in which he treats of Intension and Extension, he is under the influence of Hegelian views which seem to me more than usually inept in this connection.

On the common-sense view, which I am disposed to hold till good reason is shown for giving it up, an extensional or denotative judgment is one that tells us something about some person, thing, or concrete feature of the world in which we are interested. Mr. Bradley's own example, 'Caesar is sick,' is a plain and straightforward denotative judgment. On the other hand, a judgment which is meant to be taken in intension or connotation (both bad terms) tells us something about the qualities, aspects, laws, or relations of concrete persons and things. The Hegelian is of course excluded from this common-sense view. He must treat every proposition as a universal. "Every judgment," says Mr. Bradley speaking at the higher metaphysical level, "is universal, and in the end they may all be said to be universal absolutely" (p. 179). This, however, is an ideal of metaphysics, and, for "logical purposes," Mr. Bradley admits that "it is better to ignore it"; in logic "the extension cannot be reduced to intension" (p. 155): though he seems disposed, contrary to what I should hold to be right, to treat intension as prior to and more important than extension.

What then does Mr. Bradley, with his modified

Hegelianism, regard as the difference between intensional and extensional judgments? The first, he says, "asserts a connection of different attributes, with an indirect reference to an identical subject" (this may pass unchallenged, though "identical" is rather superfluous); the second "directly asserts the identity of the subject, with an implication of the difference of its attributes" (p. 161). In fact, we have here yet another application of the great Hegelian formula of 'identity in difference' to which such far-reaching and almost mysterious import is attributed. But, as applied to explain extensional or denotative judgments, this formula seems to render them quite meaningless. Mr. Bradley says that "in 'Caesar is sick,' the same person is said to be sick as well as Caesar" (p. 168); that is, we are asserting the identity of one man who has these two attributes of being sick and of being called Caesar (see p. 161 quoted just above). Now, really, *is* this the meaning of 'Caesar is sick'? Think of some exactly parallel statement, 'Dinner is ready.' We have all heard this hundreds of times: have we ever *once* understood it to mean an assertion of identity with an implication of different attributes, an assertion that the thing which is dinner is identical with the thing which is ready. There must be identity; but is the butler who makes the announcement meaning to assert identity. The 'plain man' would say that the butler knows we are expecting dinner and lets us know when it is ready to be eaten: in technical terms the butler adds to an

object, partially defined in our minds, a further definition appropriate to our known purpose of satisfying hunger. Would Mr. Bradley maintain that the plain man is wrong, or would he still maintain that the straightforward meaning of 'Dinner is ready' is adequately embodied in his formula of identity in difference?

§ 16. In Mr. Bradley's chapter on the Modality of Judgments there is much indeed to comment on. A good deal might be said, for instance, on the doctrine (p. 183) that the necessary is "nothing but a phase of the hypothetical." (A toothache is necessary very often. Is it a kind of hypothesis?) But this is off our immediate line of inquiry. What I wish to call attention to is Mr. Bradley's reduction of all forms of modal assertion to one, which he calls the assertorical. In opposition to the common doctrine which regards categorical assertions as formally different from the possible and the necessary, Mr. Bradley states his own position as follows:

"There are no degrees of truth and falsehood. If  $S-P$  is fact, it cannot be more than fact: if it is less than fact, it is nothing at all. The dilemma is simple.  $S-P$  is affirmed or it is not affirmed. If it is not affirmed, it is not judged true at all. If it is affirmed, it is declared to be fact, and it cannot be more or less of a fact. There clearly can be but one kind of judgment, the assertorical. Modality affects not the affirmation, but what is affirmed. It is not mere  $S-P$  that is asserted modally: it is another content, a modified  $S-P$ " (p. 181).

In other words, the common opinion says that the three statements 'S is P,' 'S may be P,' 'S must be P,' are alike in content but differ in form, one

content,  $S-P$ , being asserted in three modes, the categorical, the possible, and the necessary: Mr. Bradley, on the other hand, says that the three statements are alike in form but differ in content, and that in strictness they should be expressed as ' $S$  is  $P$ ,' ' $S$  is possible- $P$ ,' ' $S$  is necessary- $P$ .'

Now at a casual glance it may seem that no point of importance is involved in this divergence of opinion: but on consideration we shall see that Mr. Bradley's view is suitable only to a static world, and that the common view does more justice to the kinetic and dynamic factor. If there were no such thing as futurity, if the whole of existence existed complete as I speak, then Mr. Bradley would be right in holding that "there are no degrees of truth and falsehood," and that "if  $S-P$  is fact, it cannot be more than fact; if it is less than fact, it is nothing at all": clearly there could be only "one kind of judgment, the assertorical." But let us consider a simple, everyday modal assertion, ' $I$  may go down to-morrow.' Here  $S-P$  is not a fact, and yet, surely, it is not "nothing at all." Applied to futurity Mr. Bradley's "simple dilemma" fails. Again, how does such a case suit Mr. Bradley's contention that in modal assertions we assert not  $S-P$  modally, but modified  $S-P$ ? In the categorical judgment ' $I$  am going down,' an intelligible unmodified content is predicated of the subject; whether, like the ordinary grammarian, we take ' $I$ ' to be the subject, or, like Mr. Bradley, we take 'all reality' as subject. But in ' $I$  may go down to-morrow' what is the

modified content that we assert of all reality? Is it 'myself possibly going down to-morrow'? And is the simple-seeming statement 'I may go down to-morrow' really equivalent to the alarmingly mysterious 'I assert myself-possibly-going-down-to-morrow of all reality'? So far as the last form of words is intelligible at all, its meaning seems irreconcilable with that of its alleged equivalent. In short, Mr. Bradley's static intellectualism has once more led him to a false attack on common sense.

The only possibility of evading this conclusion is to make the old distinction between the logical and the psychological, and to dismiss modal statements like that just instanced as being "concerned with nothing but my mental attitude," and as having "a psychological not a logical bearing" (p. 182). I have already denied the validity of this distinction, which Mr. Bradley nowhere establishes by argument; and in the present connection it would reduce logic to a childish game. It implies that in logic you pretend that the Universe is a Totum Simul and that thought has nothing to do but to define it. As soon as we recognise change and energy, in other words, as soon as we get into real life, we are, it seems, out of logic and into psychology.

§ 17. The two latter books of the *Principles of Logic*, which deal with inference, are, to some minds at least, more valuable than the first. The early chapters of the first book contain much startling doctrine, and are highly stimulating from their vigour and novelty; but the theory of inference yields more



solid instruction. It is not at all systematic or complete; induction, particularly, is treated in very cavalier fashion. Much of it is devoted to strong polemic, the Doctrine of the Association of Ideas and the Inductive Canons of J. S. Mill bearing the brunt of attack. Whether what Mr. Bradley attacks is in all cases what his opponents really held has been doubted by many of his readers. But at any rate the general drift of Mr. Bradley's argument as making for a spiritual interpretation of reasoning is in harmony with the best tendencies of contemporary logic. He does great service too by his onslaught on those antiquated formalisms which deluded men into the hope of getting substantial results by the mere manipulation of logical symbols. The syllogism may or may not deserve all the abuse that Mr. Bradley heaps upon it; but he has successfully dissipated its prestige, and has left it to stand on its own merits, such as they are.

§ 18. So far so good: but Mr. Bradley has been stronger in polemic than in construction. The chapters in which he sets forth his own theory of inference are saturated with intellectualism and the passive fallacy in general. In the total result his doctrine is less satisfactory than Prof. Bosanquet's, who, though an intellectualist, seems always just on the point of breaking away from his unfortunate traditions and of recognising the dominant position of purpose and plan in reasoning. Before I start criticising Mr. Bradley's views on inference, it will make for clearness if I summarise in advance the



purport of what I have to say. I believe that inference depends upon plan, in other words, that from data A B we are able to infer C in so far as the plan or purpose of A B requires C for its completion. Towards this view Mr. Bradley seems to tend in many of his expressions; but, when he comes to explain these expressions systematically, he slips back to a position not much in advance of the formal logicians against whom he fulminates. Now for the criticism in detail.

§ 19. In his chapter entitled "Principles of Reasoning," Mr. Bradley inquires into the operative principle of inference, or what it is that justifies us in advancing from data A B to a further content C which is not before us, and states it as "individuality of synthesis" (p. 241). This would be an excellent phrase if we could be sure that Mr. Bradley understood it in the right sense. In the ordinary use of 'individuality' it means something like unity of plan, and in this meaning it is undoubtedly a principle, perhaps *the* principle, of inference. We can see this in a characteristic example. Let the data of the inference be a mutilated fragment of an ancient statue, and let the inference be its restoration by the expert antiquary. If asked why he supposed that the figure represented, say, a man quoit-throwing, the antiquary would doubtless point to indications in the figure showing that such was the artist's design. "Individuality of synthesis" would not be a bad phrase to express the principle of such an inference. But does Mr. Bradley understand his

principle in this way? He expresses it in formal terms thus:

"Where elements A and C are related homogeneously to a common B, A and C are related within the same genus. Or where one relation only (either A—B or B—C) is within the category of subject and attribute, there is a valid conclusion within the category of either A—B or B—C" (p. 241).

Such is the ambiguity of skeleton judgments that I cannot feel quite positive in denying that my example of the statue can be covered by Mr. Bradley's principle as thus explained: I feel almost sure that it cannot. Nor, so far as I can see, will the principle apply better to any case of individuality that I can think of.

However, further on in the chapter he specifies as principles of inferential synthesis "the principles (i.) of the synthesis of subject and attribute, (ii.) of identity, (iii.) of degree, (iv.) of space, and (v.) of time" (p. 243). None of these, again, seems to cover the statue-example. The synthesis of identity, which promises best, is explained by Mr. Bradley in a very formal way; "Coin A has the same inscription as coin B, and coin B as coin C, therefore A as C" (p. 244). It is true that he gives us to understand that yet other forms of synthesis are possible (p. 242), but he gives no examples of them. In all his definite explanations of the principle of "individuality of synthesis" he makes the mistake of just omitting the individual.

§ 20. In a chapter shortly following, entitled "Two Conditions of Inference," Mr. Bradley lays

down principles that must be regarded as supplementing or superseding the principle of individuality of synthesis. They are "(i.) it is impossible to reason except on the basis of identity ; (ii.) it is impossible to reason unless at least one premiss is universal" (p. 260). Leaving the first principle for further consideration, as being the more important, let us consider universality. I quite agree with Mr. Bradley that inference is possible only on the condition that the premises contain an element of universality ; but I complain that he interprets universality in such a way as to deprive the condition of all its significance. Universality is a term which constantly recurs in contemporary philosophy, but we seldom get an explanation of it. The true line of explanation is, I think, to regard a proposition as universal so far as it embodies a rule. Thus we can connect 'universality' with 'individuality of synthesis' in the sense that both are terms expressing plan or system. It then becomes plain why we can have no inference without universality in the premises. Unless we can discern a rule, or plan, or system in the premises or data, we cannot proceed from them to some content which is not before us.

This interpretation of universality is, however, foreign to Mr. Bradley. "An universal judgment," he says, "is one that holds of any subject which is a synthesis of differences" (p. 270). But what special virtue for inference is there in synthesis of differences as such? A handful of sand is a synthesis of differences. And the further Mr. Bradley goes in

explaining universality the less of definite meaning he leaves it. The most singular of singular judgments, such as "B is to the right of C, is," he tells us, "an universal judgment, because B is an identity which has the differences of its spatial relations to A and C" (p. 271). We have only to remember Mr. Bradley's dictum that "in the end no judgment is really particular, they are all universal" (p. 270), to see that his condition of universality in the premises of an inference is a merely tautologous condition which cannot help being fulfilled in every case.

§ 21. Let us now turn back to Mr. Bradley's other condition of inference, that it is impossible to reason except on the basis of identity. The primary importance of identity in the constitution of inference is enforced by Mr. Bradley here and elsewhere in metaphorical expressions which vary from time to time. He speaks of the identical middle term as a "bridge" which carries you across the logical chasm: failing such an identity "the back of your inference now is broken, and the extremities no longer belong to any individual principle" (p. 261). In another passage he holds that "wherever we join one premise with another we must do so by means of an identical point" (p. 268). Later on he speaks of inference as "a construction round an identical centre" (p. 419); which suggests something like a wheel with an identical content as the hub and the inferential spokes constructed round it. Elsewhere he says:

"Inference is the getting a new result from a certain

*datum*. The result is procured by an ideal operation upon this *datum*, and when procured becomes its predicate. Reasoning thus depends on the identity of a content inside a mental experiment with that content outside. And so we find once again in the total process that need of individuation, which we before discerned in the middle construction. Just as that construction was insufficient to give us a new relation of the extremes unless it joined them in an individual whole—so here the full process would not get to a conclusion unless it possessed an individuality. And it is made individual by the identity of that content which runs right through it, and which joins the final result to the initial starting-point" (p. 401 *sq.*).

This last passage, if it stood alone, and if we could take the terms 'individuation' and 'individual whole' in their natural meaning, would represent well enough the standpoint from which I myself am criticising Mr. Bradley. In that case identity would mean identity of plan, such an identity as unites the fragment of the statue which we possess with its completion which we infer. But this interpretation seems forbidden by the material or quasi-material tone in which he constantly speaks of identity, a tone which reminds us so strongly of the formal logicians. It is as though premises and conclusion were held together by actually visible and tangible clamps, or pegs, or plugs of identical content.

§ 22. This point comes out in Mr. Bradley's views on likeness and analogy. He holds that, in strictness, there is no such thing as likeness at all. When we say that two things are like we really mean that they are partially identical; we only use

the term 'like' because we do not know exactly in what point the identity consists. Likeness "refers properly to a general impression" (p. 261): it is a term to cover partial ignorance, in the same way as 'chance.' The significance of this appears when Mr. Bradley says that

"you cannot argue on the strength of mere *likeness*. Whatever else may be right this at all events must be wrong. 'A is similar to B, and B to C, and therefore A is like C,' is a vicious inference, one that need not always be mistaken in fact, but that always must be a logical error. In practice I think we should all admit this" (p. 261).

I for one, however, should not admit it for a moment either in practice or in theory.

For it is obvious that Mr. Bradley's doctrine of likeness abolishes analogical reasoning as such, a sacrifice which, in my opinion, logic can ill afford. Take such a case as that, instanced by J. S. Mill, of the village matron who administers a certain drug to her Lucy because last week it cured a neighbour's child suffering in a similar way. The plain man says that the two cases are *like* each other: Mr. Bradley must hold that they are really in part *identical*. Buried somewhere in each case, he must argue, there is an absolutely identical piece of content: this it is that justifies more or less an inference from one case to another. But all this, to my mind, is pure mythology. What is the identical clamp, peg, or plug of content "running right through" these two cases? How in any such sense can an event in the present be "joined" to an event which is past and gone?



A thorough application of Mr. Bradley's doctrine of identity and likeness would revive some of the most barren and soulless pedantries of mechanical logic. A perfect inference would be one in which there was total identity of content between data and conclusion. Let totality be symbolised by  $T$ . Then in the strongest inference short of perfect there will be  $T - 1$  points of identity; in the next below  $T - 2$  points, and so downwards: the weakest possible inference will have one point of identity, the next above two points, and so upwards. Can anything be further from a truly philosophical view of inference? All this, and much more, comes from ignoring the personal, active, and purposive character of intellectual experience.

§ 23. Static intellectualism is very plainly shown in Mr. Bradley's reduction of all reasoning processes to one fundamental type which he describes in his chapter on the "Final Essence of Reasoning." This does away with the common distinction of induction from deduction, which is, I should argue, a perfectly sound one. Not that I believe in an absolute distinction between the two; absolute distinctions are to be made very sparingly in logic, if at all. But the plain fact is that our mental procedures are quite different in induction and deduction respectively. The difference may be illustrated best from the more active mental operations: in framing a plan to carry out a purpose in a given situation we are proceeding inductively; in carrying out a plan previously formed we are proceeding



deductively. The two sorts of procedure require different gifts of mind and different attitudes to reality.

Such facts are necessarily ignored by the Hegelian panlogism: for Hegel there can be but one type of mental process, the movement from the more abstract to the less abstract categories of the *Encyclopedia*. Mr. Bradley's acceptance of sensation as an element of knowledge precludes him from the full Hegelian position; but he is, nevertheless, strongly inclined towards it. He holds that a true analysis of mental operations should "prevent our staggering at the truth of a weighty paradox; 'Knowledge advances from the abstract to the concrete'" (p. 434). The "paradox" is, of course, a cornerstone of Hegelianism; and the paragraph which follows will show how Mr. Bradley has re-shaped it for his own system.

The single mental process to which Mr. Bradley reduces what are commonly called induction and deduction is termed by him analysis and synthesis. These two terms, he goes on to say, are really names of one process. "Analysis and synthesis have so much in common that they are actually identical . . . though different they are the same" (p. 430). Such difference, therefore, as does exist between them seems to be in our point of view. "In analysis the given becomes the continuity of fresh discretess, while in synthesis it becomes one single discrete in a fresh seen continuity"; "in analysis we employ a function of plurality in unity,

in synthesis we use a function of unity in plurality"; in one we have "difference with identity"; in the other "identity with difference" (pp. 432 *sq.*). The truth at the bottom of this I take to be that induction and deduction alike involve an analytic-synthetic activity of thought, that is, in both we break up the given world into elements and recombine them for our own purposes. But that is quite a different thing from saying that induction and deduction are nothing but analysis-cum-synthesis.

§ 24. Mr. Bradley's final chapters on the Validity of Inference present as clear an example as any one could wish of the passive fallacy tinged with intellectualism. For reasoning processes to claim validity Mr. Bradley requires of them at least two things, first, that they should have developed of themselves without our personal interference; secondly, that they should copy reality. Both requirements seem to me utterly unjustifiable and impossible.

"We must begin," he says, "with a frank and ready admission. If we really did make of our own free will the conclusion which we come to, if the result did not 'follow' of itself from the *datum*, but were pushed and thrust on by our arbitrary force . . . then assuredly the process is invalid and vicious" (p. 500).

Mr. Bradley then proceeds to examine various forms of reasoning in order to find one "where the conclusion really comes from the unhelped premises" (*ibid.*), and argues that there are certain forms of reasoning in which this does take place. It is needless to discuss his distinction between self-developing and non-self-developing forms of reason-

ing, because, in my opinion, the distinction and all that it implies is chimerical. *Never* does the conclusion come unhelped from the premises; *no* "premises change before our eyes into the consequence" (p. 501); the "content concluded" is *never* "wholly unhelped, untouched and self-developed" (p. 502); *no* "premises themselves pass into the result" (p. 504). With all the language of self-impelled, self-developing inferences we are in a land of mythology, the Hegelian mythology of thoughts that have hands and feet and go about of themselves. As soon as we wipe mythology from our eyes we see that premises might lie side by side to all eternity, and yet no conclusion result; or rather, to speak in strict language, that premises are not premises at all till some person premises them, that is, takes them in order to work a conclusion out of them. The whole inferential construction—premises and conclusion—is nothing but a contrivance to further human purposes.

And if all logical process, all inference, is thus purposive, then it must be selective and exhibit volition. To Mr. Bradley the volitional element in inference is a ground for distrusting it: he says, for example, that

"wherever the mind makes an arbitrary choice, wherever it seems to operate at will (as in distinction, comparison, and again in abstraction), that capricious alteration can hardly represent the course of events. And a dire suspicion was then whispered within us. If in inference the conclusion is made what it is by an arbitrary act, how can any such process be true of reality"? (p. 497.)

To speak of the volition displayed in distinction and the rest as "arbitrary" and "capricious" is, of course, to beg the question. We distinguish, compare, and abstract in order to gain some end: if the end is reasonable, then a judicious operation to gain it should not be stigmatised as arbitrary and capricious, though it certainly is an act of choice and will. We take what we want and leave the rest. It is no ground of complaint against inference that it does not take everything.

§ 25. And if the process of reasoning be selective it cannot "represent the course of events." Why ever should it? Why should the "process of our reasoning" be an "ideal counterpart of fact"? (p. 521). Why should our mental operations be "the same with any actual process in things"? (*ibid.*) Why should any "intellectual experiment" be "the parallel of a movement in the real universe" or "the literal expression of . . . facts" or "the double of an outward change that shows feature for feature in an answering element" (*ibid.*). It is a well-known thing about idiots that their mental operations "represent the course of events" much more literally than those of sane men, and altogether bear something of that looking-glass relation to existence which the foregoing extracts seem to desiderate. Surely, the higher our intellect rises, the further it gets from slavish reproduction. The intellectual man desires to learn the formulae of humanity and nature, the generalisations which will enable him to understand and control important tracts of reality.

In the mental operations by which he reaches the formulae I cannot discern any parallelism to facts at all: the formulae themselves follow reality only in the sense of embodying its plan. Nor is Mr. Bradley in a better position if the reality be understood, not as the string of sensuous appearances, but as the One Absolute Reality. Indeed there are additional objections quite special to this latter interpretation. If we asked inference to conform to phenomena we should know at least what it was that inference had to conform to; in the other alternative we should be asking it to conform to the unknown.

My position, then, is that, not only is it impossible for reasoning to be in any sense a "strict counterpart of the nature of things" (p. 498), but that it would be no better for reasoning if it could be. In one sense the world does demand that reasoning should conform to fact, but such conformity is not what Mr. Bradley means. He is thinking of a point-to-point conformity.

"How," he cries, "can we submit to the belief that *my* reasoning must represent reality? How can we suppose that each trivial argument, every wretched illustration that we may have used in these discussions, provided only it be free from flaw, must have its direct counterpart in the nature of things?" (p. 524).

But all this is wide of the mark: the conformity which the world demands is primarily a conformity of results, using 'results' in the widest sense. The astronomer predicts the eclipse and, if the eclipse appears at the stated time, that conformity satisfies

common sense. The computations which were necessary to the prediction must conform to reality only so far as is needed to secure the success of the operation. In other words, what men require of reasoning is that it shall submit to verification, such verification as the subject allows, the best of all being accurate prediction. Mr. Bradley never mentions verification, though I believe that on sound principles it must be regarded as one of the most important heads of logic. Its place in his work is taken in some measure by these discussions on the counterfeit presentment of the real, discussions which, I believe, never touch on the validity of any mental operation at all.

§ 26. So far, for the sake of clearing the issues, I have spoken as though inference were concerned with investigating a reality unalterable by our will—as though we were normally engaged in investigations such as those of the geologist and astronomer. Even on this supposition Mr. Bradley's remarks on validity fall wide of the facts. Still less truth have they if we dispense with this highly artificial supposition, and recognise that the main function of inference is to help us to act upon reality. The soldier reasons out a plan of attack, infers that he will capture the fortification, orders the assault, and verifies his reasoning by success. Plans, or active inferences, are the commonest, the most important, and the most typical examples of reasoning; and they flatly contradict all Mr. Bradley's criteria of validity. They never develop themselves, they

always involve the selective interference of the mind that makes them, and, so far from copying reality, they make reality copy them. Intellectualism is debarred from giving any account of active inferences: their origin, their material, their method of operation, and their validity are all beyond the ken of the dominant logic. They are either ignored, or relegated to some outer limbo of psychology.

The true friends of logical science must always deplore its neglect of the active side of life as fatal to its interest and vitality. Logic is a study that a man of the world is half ashamed of; its traditions and associations are pedantic, unreal, absurdly out of relation to facts. Though admittedly valuable as mental gymnastic it has always bordered on the ridiculous, like the goose-step of the German army. We shall never get logic out of the goose-step condition till we have made it more adequate to life.

§ 27. The element of Absolutism is less patent upon the surface of Mr. Bradley's book, but pervades it with a subtle influence the limits of which are extremely hard to define. Not the least formidable among the critic's difficulties are due to the fact that Mr. Bradley, when he wrote the *Principles of Logic*, had hardly elaborated his metaphysic to the form in which it appears in *Appearance and Reality*. "On all [metaphysical] questions," he says in his preface, "if you push me far enough, at present I end in doubts and perplexities." Doubts and perplexities, accordingly, are what beset his critic at the



end of the most patient investigation. The result which appears to emerge is that Mr. Bradley has borrowed the conception of the Absolute from Hegel ; has used it for certain logical purposes without considering how far it harmonises with certain fundamental portions of his logic ; has indicated that he desiderates a radical change in the Hegelian conception of the Absolute ; and has correlated the conception of the Absolute thus revised with certain other logical doctrines, once more without reference to the consistency of his whole logical scheme.

The Hegelian conception of the Absolute appears unmistakably in a passage in which Mr. Bradley indicates the completed ideal of reason as contrasted with the one-sided processes which the human mind actually follows.

"If we realised our ideal," he says, "what then should we get? We should get a way of thinking in which the whole of reality was a system of its differences immanent in each difference. In this whole the analysis of any one element would, by nothing but the self-development of that element, produce the totality. The internal unfolding of any one portion would be the blossoming of that other side of its being, without which itself is not consummate. The inward growth of the member would be its natural synthesis with the complement of its essence. And synthesis again would be the movement of the whole within its own body. It would not force its parts into violent conjunctions, but, itself in each, by the loss of self-constraint would embrace its own fulfilment. And the fresh product so gained would renew this process, where self-fission turns to coition with an opposite and the merging of both in a higher organism. Nor would the process cease till, the whole being embraced, it had

nought left against it but its conscious system. Then, the elements knowing themselves in the whole and so self-conscious in one another, and the whole so finding in its recognised self-development the unmixed enjoyment of its completed nature, nothing alien or foreign would trouble the harmony. It would all have vanished in that perfected activity which is the rest of the absolute" (pp. 449 *sq.*).

This passage is nothing but a poetic statement of the principle of the Hegelian dialectic.

That the ideal of reason is a self-developing Absolute Thought is consistent enough with that part of Mr. Bradley's famous second chapter in which all ordinary judgments are reduced to combinations of abstract ideas, and with the general intellectualist tendency to ignore volition or to reduce it to a form of thinking. What Mr. Bradley does not attempt to justify is his combination of Hegelian absolutism with a considerable recognition of the finite individual. We have seen how Hegel's system requires him practically to ignore the finite individual. This Mr. Bradley never attempts for a moment. He assumes all along that the knowledge of which logic is the theory is knowledge existing primarily in finite individual minds. Here, then, is a fatal want of consistency. I do not mean to say that some sort of Absolute is not compatible with recognition of the individual: but what Mr. Bradley does is to adopt a form of absolutism which excludes the individual, and use it for purposes of logical explanation, while at the same time according in other respects full recognition to the individual.

§ 28. The most important, though not the most prominent, of Mr. Bradley's applications of absolutism is to explain the *nisus* of thought, in other words, the motive force which impels us to judge, affirm, and generally to embark upon the business of thinking. Were the question put before the plain man he would doubtless say that we think because we have got to live: but Mr. Bradley must seek his *nisus* elsewhere, and he finds it in a principle of self-development which operates in the individual similarly to that principle of cosmic development shadowed forth in the recent quotation.

This principle is introduced by Mr. Bradley rather gradually. We get a first glimpse of it in his second chapter, where he says that

"in common life we all experience the tendency to pass from one single case to some other instance. We take what is true at one time and place to be always true at all times and places. We generalise from a single example. We may deplore this tendency as an ineradicable vice of the unphilosophic mind, or we may recognise it as the inevitable condition of all experience, and the *sine qua non* of every possible inference" (p. 92).

The most distinctive and impressive statement of the principle is the following:

"It is a law that, when we have a subject A, and with this a possible predicate b, and when . . . this predicate b is left alone—that then the subject appropriates this predicate, and openly attributes it to itself as a possession. We may not recognise this law, we might even like to repudiate its claim, but we cannot help obeying it. Where a suggestion has been made, if that suggestion is not rejected by the fact which we start with, or again by some other suggested quality; if, in short, we are left,

not with disparate possibles, but with one uncombated may-be—that suggestion must always be taken as fact. This is a process of thought, and it does not seem to fall under any previous process, but on the contrary to lie at the root of all our reasoning. . . . The striving for perfection, the desire of the mind for an infinite totality, is indeed the impulse which moves our intellect to appropriate everything from which it is not forced off" (p. 451). The same principle under the name of the "conclusion from impotence" forms, according to Mr. Bradley, the ultimate justification of disjunctive reasoning (p. 129), and he also connects it with that formula of self-realisation which represents the outcome of *Ethical Studies*.

"This double effort of the mind," he says, "to enlarge by all means its domain, to widen in every way both the world of knowledge and the realm of practice, shows us merely two sides of that single impulse to self-realisation, which most of us are agreed to find so mystical" (p. 452).

Those who do not follow Mr. Bradley in his acceptance of the Absolute find it hard to adopt his "conclusion from impotence." Thus Prof. Bosanquet remarks in discussing Mr. Bradley's treatment of the disjunctive judgment, "I confess that I cannot see my way to the principle that a sole possibility is fact," and adds with an air of perplexity, "I am almost driven to suppose that I have failed to understand the nature of this principle. I do not seem to myself to be aware of its operation" (*Knowledge and Reality*, p. 260). There are a good many people who would have to make a similar confession.

§ 29. The most conspicuous use which Mr. Bradley makes of absolutism is to confute the sensa-

tionist logicians. Their mainstay, as we know, is sense-perception. One line of Mr. Bradley's attack upon the perceptive judgment is, as we have already seen, the reduction of it to the lowest form of abstract or hypothetical judgment. The other line is to assert that it is false because partial. A subordinate form of this attack is the argument that the content of the perceptive judgment has no definite boundaries.

"Seeking there [*i.e.* in the given] for the simple," says Mr. Bradley, "at the end of our search we still are confronted by the composite and relative. And the outer edges themselves are fluent. They pass for ever in time and space into that which is outside them" (p. 98).

Another subordinate form of attack is that any perceptive judgment such as 'P exists' is only true if all its conditions are contained within the judgment :

"and here the conditions are the whole extent of spaces and times which are required to make the given complete. . . . And this cannot be. It is not merely inconceivable psychologically; it is metaphysically impossible" (pp. 99, 104).

Both these subordinate objections are after all merged in the grand objection that the perceptive judgment is partial. "You must take up the given as it really appears without omission, unaltered, and unmutated. And this is impossible" (p. 98). Presumably, the only perceptive judgment which Mr. Bradley would admit to be true would be the impossible one which predicates of reality all the perceptive content which exists, has existed, or will exist. Such a judgment I suppose would deserve

the title of categorical, because it would predicate of the Total Reality one entire aspect of it.

§ 30. When Mr. Bradley comes to face the final question, Where is the categorical or perfectly true judgment to be found? we observe that he turns to "a class of judgment which makes an assertion about an individual which is not a phenomenon in space or time" (p. 107). Among such judgments are "The self is real" and "Phenomena are nothing beyond the appearance of soul to soul" (*ibid.*). The difficulty about accepting such judgments as categorical is that, to an absolutism which goes beyond even Mr. Bradley, they also exhibit a certain kind of selection and partialness. The "falseness of the analytic [*i.e.* the simple perceptive] judgment" he ascribes partly to its "stating a part as if it were the whole," and partly to the fact that in it "we have separated, divided, abridged, dissected, we have mutilated the given; and we have done this arbitrarily, we have selected what we chose" (p. 94). Well, but all this with a slight change of phrase might be said of Mr. Bradley's own example 'The self is real.' And it might be said, too, of every judgment except that one unexceptionable case where the Absolute predicates its whole perceptive content of itself.

This may serve as a *reductio ad absurdum* answer to Mr. Bradley's absolutist line of attack upon the perceptive judgment. Partialness and selection are features of every act of thought; so far are they from convicting a judgment of falsity that they are essential conditions of truth.

§ 31. So far the absolutism that we have traced in the *Principles of Logic* is, or might be, a thought-absolutism of the Hegelian type. It is certain, however, that we can discern already in this work that reaction against the Thought-Absolute which is carried to such lengths in *Appearance and Reality*. The passage in which Mr. Bradley makes his claim for the inclusion of feeling in reality has become almost classical :

"Unless thought stands for something that falls beyond mere intelligence, if 'thinking' is not used with some strange implication that never was part of the meaning of the word, a lingering scruple still forbids us to believe that reality can ever be purely rational. It may come from a failure in my metaphysics ; or from a weakness of the flesh which continues to blind me, but the notion that existence could be the same as understanding strikes as cold and ghostlike as the dreariest materialism. That the glory of this world in the end is appearance leaves the world more glorious, if we feel it is a show of some fuller splendour ; but the sensuous curtain is a deception and a cheat, if it hides some colourless movement of atoms, some spectral woof of impalpable abstractions, or unearthly ballet of bloodless categories. Though dragged to such conclusions, we cannot embrace them. Our principles may be true, but they are not reality. They no more *make* that whole which commands our devotion, than some shredded dissection of human tatters *is* that warm and breathing beauty of flesh which our hearts found delightful" (p. 533).

With this valuation of feeling we cannot fail to connect Mr. Bradley's doctrine that it is in "sensible presentation" that we make "direct encounter with the real world" (p. 64). This doctrine he expresses in a variety of phrases, as



that it is only by means of this "one unique point of contact with reality" that our experience "can be stamped with the mark of fact" (p. 69), or that "it is impossible, perhaps, to get directly at reality, except in the content of one presentation: we may never see it, so to speak, but through a hole" (p. 70).

§ 32. The foes of the fantastic in philosophy will welcome as a mark of grace Mr. Bradley's recognition of the place of sense-perception in knowledge, and few will complain of his desire to see feeling included in absolute reality so long as it is kept within bounds. Even Prof. Bosanquet remarks

"it was well done, in my judgment, to invest Perception with the pre-eminent importance of being the one point in which we have direct contact with reality, and to give this contact with reality the decisive position in the activity of judgment" (*Knowledge and Reality*, p. 17);

though he finds fault with the "bloodless ballet" passage as laying its author open to "suspicions of a crude dualistic realism" (*ibid.* p. 18). But it is impossible to ignore the serious difficulties which this recognition of feeling causes for the internal consistency of Mr. Bradley's work.

Certain of these difficulties have been alluded to already (*supra* § 12). If sense-perception is our point of contact with the real, then it ought to be the basis or material of knowledge: from sense-perception we ought to start, and to sense-perception we ought to recur for verification. But all this

is quite inconsistent with Mr. Bradley's treatment of knowledge from the intellectualist point of view. We do not come to the "world of science," he says (p. 92), till we have got "away from the facts [*i.e.* sensuous experiences]" "towards shadows [*i.e.* abstractions]".

We may draw this series of criticisms to a head by pointing out that, on Mr. Bradley's view, knowledge has no point of attachment to Reality anywhere. This difficulty does not occur in Hegel, since, Reality being entirely thought, knowledge at any stage is simply identical with the corresponding stage of Reality. It is Mr. Bradley's admission of a sensuous element into Reality, combined with his intellectualism, that makes it impossible for him to bring knowledge and reality together. As we have seen in previous criticisms, he would have us believe that, in its lowest sense-perceptive stage, knowledge only touches Reality as a starting-point which it leaves at once. Consider now the further stages: How by the progress of knowledge do we define reality? what qualities do we attribute to it by the judgments we make? It is Mr. Bradley's position that all propositions of the form 'A is B' are reducible to the form 'If A then B,' and that, therefore, neither A nor B is asserted of reality. What we really do assert of Reality, according to Mr. Bradley, is an "occult or latent" quality *x*, which guarantees the sequence 'If A, then B' (pp. 85 *sqq.*). But this practically gives up the defining of Reality altogether: one makes no pro-

gress towards defining an object by attributing occult  $x$ 's to it. Finally, Mr. Bradley shows no connection of completed knowledge with Reality. It is fundamental with him that human knowledge, however complete, is essentially incapable of grasping Reality. Knowledge therefore, it would seem, is neither based on sensation nor ends in the Absolute, but hangs miraculously in vacancy: it rests on nothing, reaches nothing, and refers to nothing all along.

One feels doubtful whether to explain the inconclusiveness of the *Principles of Logic* by its author's admission of an unintelligible element into the Real, or by his failure to unify the conflicting elements of his logical theory; probably both causes contribute. Whatever be our explanation, the scepticism, one might almost say the hopelessness, of the work is remarkable. One certainty alone, emphatic though negative, closes the long-drawn oscillation and disputation of his last chapter: "no cheap and easy monism can stand before an enquiry into logic" (p. 533). Very true, no doubt; the only question is which monism may claim to be the cheapest and easiest. Mr. Bradley apparently has the materialists and sensationists in view; but there are some who think that in such a competition Hegel is not much behind Haeckel and Herbert Spencer: and, unless my valuation is quite at fault, a sceptical monism is cheaper and easier than anything.

§ 33. Mr. Bradley's third and last book, *Appearance and Reality* (1893), is, in spite of some show

of complexity, much simpler than either of its predecessors, being devoted entirely to advocating what I have called Feeling-Absolutism as the most satisfactory theory of the universe. It falls logically into two parts, which in the actual arrangement are rather shuffled together, one on the imperfection of the world of human experience, the other on the perfection of the Absolute. So it should ever be with mystical or quasi-mystical works--*De contemptu mundi*, leading up to *De perfectione universi*.

From one point of view the book has been criticised in previous chapters. In Chapter III. I attempted a general definition of Absolutism; in Chapter V. I distinguished Feeling-Absolutism from Thought-Absolutism, and thereafter drew out what I regarded as its logical consequences, illustrating from *Appearance and Reality* my argument that feeling-absolutism involves scepticism and is impotent for explanation in every branch of philosophy. Now I propose to comment on Mr. Bradley's metaphysic, more in and for itself than as exemplifying the mischievous working of an idolon.

The first point to be noted is that Mr. Bradley never proves his Absolute, the two arguments in this direction which can be collected from his book plainly falling short of proof as soon as they are briefly stated. The first of them is that we must postulate a perfect Absolute because all finite existence is imperfect. Mr. Bradley does not, I believe, put the matter into this short form, but we must understand this to be the upshot of his Book I.,

entitled "Appearance": there can be no other reason for subjecting every kind of finite existence to destructive criticism. But it needs no elaborate argument to show that, having proved every finite thing imperfect, one is no nearer to a perfect Absolute: the condemnation of the parts is not the justification of the whole. Mr. Bradley's other argument is more explicit. He says that in testing every finite object by a criterion which denies inconsistency we imply that we possess an absolute criterion, *i.e.*, self-consistency; and that this guarantees the existence of an Object satisfying it. "Our standard denies inconsistency, and therefore asserts consistency. If we can be sure that the inconsistent is unreal, we must, logically,<sup>1</sup> be just as sure that the reality is consistent" (p. 139). But, I answer, granted the validity of Mr. Bradley's absolute criterion (which I shall presently discuss, § 36), it does *not* follow that there exists an Object which will satisfy it. If Reality exists, says Mr. Bradley, it must be self-consistent. Very well, I reply; but *does* Reality exist in the sense that Mr. Bradley uses 'Reality'? If Reality or the Absolute cannot be proved to exist by independent arguments, it will not be conjured into existence by the criterion.

§ 34. Mr. Bradley's assumption of the Absolute is covered to some extent by his use of the question-begging terms 'appearance' and 'reality,' which

<sup>1</sup> "Logically" seems hardly a suitable term in this case: Mr. Bradley's argument has the form 'If not A is not-B, then B is A.' For remarks on the alleged priority of the 'standard' to 'reality,' see *infra* § 36.

he treats as correlatives, so that to call anything 'appearance' implies a 'reality' behind it which appears in the appearance. The result of his sceptical first book is that all phenomena are 'appearances': having thus proved the existence of appearances he has proved, if we accept his terms, the existence of the correlative 'reality.' This argument, however, is upset merely by denying Mr. Bradley's right to use 'appearance' and 'reality' as correlatives.

But in his assumption of the Absolute Mr Bradley is, of course, not the victim of verbal ambiguity; he is rather yielding to the impulse of that mystical temperament which makes itself seen in his introduction. To Mr. Bradley's mind philosophy in general and metaphysic in particular is related to the "sense of mystery and enchantment," to aimless wandering, to love for an object we know not what, to the charm of twilight, to experiences which bring us into "communion with what is beyond the visible world," and with "something higher, which both supports and humbles, both chastens and transports us" (pp. 3 *seq.*). In "certain persons, the intellectual effort to understand the universe is a principal way of . . . experiencing the Deity" (p. 5). For scientific reasons, doubtless, mysticism is kept in the background through the body of his work; but the course of his argument is unintelligible unless we recognise its latent influence.

§ 35. In Chapter V. I spoke of Mr. Bradley's Absolute as conceived under the form of feeling,

and framed my criticism accordingly ; but, as a fact, this is not an adequate phrase to express the predominant position of the feeling-element in the Bradleian Absolute. The Absolute, Mr. Bradley says many times, is an experience, and this experience must include, not thought merely, as the Hegelians have it, but feeling and will (cf. *A.R.* 2nd ed. p. 554). Thus there should be at least three elements in the Absolute. On a closer scrutiny, however, the three resolve themselves into two ; for Mr. Bradley still holds "will always to be the self-realisation of an idea" (*ibid.* p. 619), and an idea is presumably always a form of thought. We are left then with feeling and thought only in the Absolute. But a further consideration shows that there is no sort of equality between these two elements. The feeling which belongs to the Absolute is, so far as we are given to understand, not essentially dissimilar from human feeling. The thought of the Absolute, on the other hand, must be essentially dissimilar. It is a fundamental assertion of Mr. Bradley's that the relational form, by which human thought works, is self-contradictory and unreal : the thought of the Absolute must therefore be non-relational. But of such non-relational thought we cannot form the most distant conception, nor does Mr. Bradley throughout his book attempt in any way to help us to conceive it. It follows, then, that the element of the Absolute of which we have no conception and which is the victim of an incurable self-contradiction, is entirely



swallowed and absorbed by the element which we can conceive, and of which no self-contradiction is alleged. For us the Absolute must be pure indistinguishable feeling. I know that Mr. Bradley would protest passionately against this. "The Absolute," he cries, "stands above, and not below, its internal distinctions . . . it includes them as elements in its fulness . . . it is not the indifference but the concrete identity of all extremes" (p. 533). But we must distinguish between what Mr. Bradley wants, and what he has succeeded in establishing. I know that he hates the thought of an Absolute which is a featureless blank. I contend, however, that *on the conditions which he lays down* we can conceive of the Absolute in no way but as a featureless blank.

All this must be kept in mind by those who are inclined to credit the Bradleian Absolute with the advantages, such as they are, of the Hegelian. The Hegelian Absolute is but a poor substitute for human personality, and yet its imagined mode of existence approximates in some measure to that of the human person: since it is conceived under the form of intelligence, the opposites which it combines and reconciles may be regarded as intelligent human qualities. The nearest approach in actuality to the Hegelian concrete identity of opposites is found in human characters which exhibit strangely diverse qualities, as when a man is honest about money but dishonest in love, or clever in finance but stupid over cards. Such cases make the Hegelian Absolute

distantly conceivable. On the other hand, nothing makes the omni-solvency of the Bradleian Absolute conceivable, except those experiences of stupor which are not so much human as infra-human.

§ 36. Bearing these criticisms in mind, let us ask what relation the Feeling-Absolute bears to that Principle of Self-Contradiction which makes so great a figure in *Appearance and Reality*, and is stated otherwise as the criterion of self-consistency and internal harmony. The Principle itself may easily be misunderstood. From a section in the *Principles of Logic* (pp. 135 *sqq.*), combined with an appendix in *Appearance and Reality* (2nd ed. pp. 562 *sqq.*), we gather what it is not: it is not the merely formal Law of Contradiction, 'A is not not-A.' Of this formal law Mr. Bradley speaks with much contempt, as an "absurdly feeble," "weak and perfectly inoffensive" affair (*P.L.* p. 141): it does not dominate facts; its whole content is derived from them. To understand what the Principle of Self-Contradiction does mean we must go to those passages in which Mr. Bradley is dealing with the matter directly and is speaking with precision. These occur in his chapter on the "General Nature of Reality," which must be read in connection with the sceptical and destructive chapters on "Appearance," more particularly that entitled "Relation and Quality," which contains the gist of them all. "The result of our First Book," he says, "has been mainly negative. We have taken up a number of ways of regarding reality,

and we have found that they all are vitiated by self-discrepancy" (p. 135). What this self-discrepancy means we have seen already; it is due to the essential viciousness of the relational form. Now the same principle that condemns appearance justifies Reality. Throughout the First Book, says Mr. Bradley, "we were judging phenomena and were condemning them, and throughout we proceeded as if the self-contradictory could not be real. But this was surely to have and to apply an absolute criterion" (p. 136). It is because it satisfies the absolute criterion that Reality is real. It is real, in fact, because it transcends that relational form which is the essential vice of appearance.

From all this it is plain that Mr. Bradley's Criterion and his Absolute are one thing under two names: the Criterion is merely a formulation of the Absolute. Ostensibly, as we have seen (*supra* § 33), the Criterion comes first, and the Absolute or Reality is established thereby. But we cannot doubt that really the Absolute is prior: if Mr. Bradley's mind had not been preoccupied with the Absolute, the Criterion would never have occurred to him.

It is important to observe that Mr. Bradley can claim non-contradiction for the Absolute only in this sense of non-relationality. He is not entitled, for example, to say that the Absolute is self-consistent in the ordinary sense. As we have just seen, mere formal-logical consistency may be left out of account, and in any case it is not applicable to the Absolute which both is and is not any predicate that one can

mention. In the commonest, most sensible, and most literal use of self-consistency there is always reference to plan or purpose, such as a 'self' might pursue. Such self-consistency, once more, is alien to the Feeling-Absolute. The very term 'self-consistency' is one which Mr. Bradley cannot rightly claim to use. He has proved of the self that in what ever way it is taken "it will prove to be appearance;" that it cannot "maintain itself against external relations which "enter its essence" and "ruin its independency," that it is "in any case unintelligible"; that "it does not give us the facts as they are in reality, and, as it gives them, they are appearance, appearance and error"; that it carries us away into a maze of relations, relations that lead to illusory terms, and terms disappearing into endless relations; and, finally, that "it seems, where not hiding itself in obscurity, a mere bundle of discrepancies" (pp. 119 *sq.*). Obviously any term compounded with 'self' must be unsuitable for defining the Absolute.

Still less is Mr. Bradley entitled to assume that the Absolute is non-contradictory, or self-consistent, or harmonious, or perfect in any hedonistic or eudaemonistic sense. This assumption he does make, and in more than one passage justifies it by an argument which has a strange ring of *The Will to Believe*: "if the main tendencies of our nature do not reach consummation in the Absolute," he says, for example, "we cannot believe that we have attained to perfection and truth" (p. 148). Else-

where he justifies his assumption that the Absolute is happy by its alleged harmoniousness. "If the Absolute is to be theoretically harmonious its elements must not collide. Idea must not disagree with sensation, nor must sensations clash" (p. 155). All this may be very true; but Mr. Bradley has not proved it, except by taking advantage of the ambiguity of the term 'harmonious.' From the harmoniousness of the super-relational there is no logical passage to the harmoniousness of happiness. That the conception of an unhappy Absolute offers no intrinsic impossibility we know from the 'Unconscious' of von Hartmann.

§ 37. And we must beware of supposing that the Principle of Self-Contradiction guarantees the perfection of Mr. Bradley's Absolute in the way that it guarantees the perfection of Hegel's. For Hegel all things are thoughts, and every finite thought is always tending by its inherent dialectic to pass over to its own contradictory with which it synthesises itself, only to suffer a new diremption. Self-contradiction or self-opposition is the omnipresent moving principle which makes the finite grow by a homogeneous process into the infinite: the Hegelian Absolute is perfect just because self-contradiction has done its utmost work within the finite. Quite otherwise is it with a 'pantēctic' absolutism like Mr. Bradley's. There can be no homogeneous process from finite to infinite; for the relational is utterly disparate from the super-relational. Nor is the Principle of Self-Contradiction a principle of

movement in finite things; it is a simple test by which they are condemned (p. 136). It cannot guarantee the all-round, comprehensive perfection of the Absolute which satisfies it: because the Absolute satisfies the test we cannot be assured that it includes the valuable elements of the finite things which have not satisfied it.

§ 38. This leads us to consider Mr. Bradley's doctrine of Degrees of Truth and Reality. Some people, who regard Mr. Bradley too much as Hegel's disciple, have called this the centre of *Appearance and Reality*<sup>1</sup>: to me it seems to be more or less out of place there. In Hegel it has perfect appropriateness; for he regards the True and Real as entirely rational, and is therefore able to attribute truth and reality to finite existences in proportion to their rationality. In Mr. Bradley, on the other hand, the doctrine has the air of having been borrowed from Hegel merely to conciliate common sense and to mitigate the paradox that the Absolute, in a sense, is evil, false, and ugly (p. 488).

I have in a former passage (Chapter V. § 6) noticed that Mr. Bradley cannot make any application of this doctrine. Rejecting human criteria he must use the Absolute as his criterion, a purpose for which it is unsuitable in whatever way we understand it. If, on the one hand, we understand it as a sensuous neutrum, it follows that finite ex-

<sup>1</sup> Its main thesis is rather that reality is more than thought, *i.e.* thought + feeling (*A.R.* 2nd ed. p. 555).

periences will be higher in degree in proportion as the feeling-element in them swallows up every other; which would be monstrous. If, on the other hand, we take the Absolute, in the sense that Mr. Bradley wishes us to take it, as an experience which includes but transcends feeling, it still gives us no practical criterion for estimating degrees. Mr. Bradley can tell us nothing of the Absolute but that it is all-inclusive and perfectly harmonious. The former quality, that of bigness or extensiveness (cf. *A.R.* p. 370), gives nothing but the roughest criterion, which in many cases is quite inapplicable: better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay. The quality of harmony has still less criterion value: the life of Europe is probably not more harmonious than that of Greenland or China. In any case no one ever dreams of using a criterion so ill-defined and inaccessible as the Absolute; we always rely on criteria merely human.

§ 39. In first approaching mysticism (Chapter III.) I ventured upon a distinction between its optimistic and pessimistic forms. The first, which sees the divine perfection shining through every form of finite existence, has its most familiar representatives in the tender pantheistic nature-worship of Wordsworth, and in the confident new-world transcendentalism of Emerson. For illustrations of the opposite tendency we have Schopenhauer and von Hartmann, who are influenced by repulsion from the actual world rather than by attraction towards ideal Perfection. Mr. Bradley is not to be classified



offhand as belonging to one or the other; but he certainly has a pessimistic tinge which prevents him from making, so to speak, the best of his Absolute. A mystic who wants to make us love the universe must have something of the Wordsworthian or Emersonian enthusiasm: it is quite right that Mr. Bradley, like other mystics, should have his homily *De contemptu mundi*; but the question is whether he has not overdone it. The Absolute that is established by negative, sceptical, and destructive arguments will never be an amiable one: in Mr. Bradley's own phrase, "though dragged to such conclusions, we cannot embrace them." On one point certainly Mr. Bradley's Absolute does bring us full conviction, it has all the fulness of sensuous life: this is something to be thankful for; but we should like to feel equally convinced of its richness of intellectual interest, moral virtue, and beauty.

§ 40. All this, that makes the Absolute less interesting, makes us less disposed to believe in it as real. Nor, to speak plainly, does Mr. Bradley encourage our faith as much as he might. In one passage he says "In the Absolute there is probably no pleasure [and, presumably, no pain] outside of finite souls" (p. 200). Now, who can care for an Absolute that is not even pleased or pained? In a later passage he goes yet further: "it is better, on the whole, to conclude that no element of Reality falls outside the experience of finite centres" (p. 528). Taken by itself this seems to make the Absolute

but a fifth wheel to the coach, and to leave everything to human and infra-human spirits. There are some who have thought that scepticism is the last word of Mr. Bradley's book, and that a more appropriate title for it would be the *Disappearance of Reality*: others have suspected that the only function of the Absolute is to give Mr. Bradley opening for a long series of bitter and destructive comments on things that common humanity holds dear. Such critics lay stress on the difficulty of taking seriously a totally impassive Absolute that can do nothing for man, and maintains a more than Epicurean indifference to human weal and woe. For my own part, however, I think that such a line of criticism fails to do justice to the subtleties of the mystic temperament: I am convinced of the depth and strength of Mr. Bradley's belief, hard as it may be for us to formulate that belief in coldly logical terms. Somehow or other the Absolute, as Mr. Bradley states it, does give a satisfaction to certain minds; if nothing more, it gratifies a mood of cosmic emotion, perhaps even offers consolation for the shortcomings of mundane existence.

§ 41. Some very abstruse questions are suggested by the element of Subjectivism in *Appearance and Reality*, which might perhaps be pursued with advantage had Mr. Bradley himself gone more fully into the matter, and discussed the difficulties connected with his position. He starts from the generally admitted position of idealism, "Anything, in no sense felt or perceived" is "quite unmeaning";

and passes thence to the much more disputable subjectivist position, "Experience is the same as reality" (p. 145), or, conversely, "Reality is sentient experience" (p. 146). Of this transition he speaks with absolute confidence, "so far we may be said to know absolutely and unconditionally" (*A.R.* p. 536): contrary opinions he stigmatises as vicious abstractions and "meaningless nonsense" (p. 145). Now, when it is stated by a thinker of Mr. Bradley's type that reality = experience, the statement seems capable only of three interpretations. The experience referred to must be either that (1) of finite individuals alone, or (2) of the Absolute alone, or (3) of the Absolute as somehow including the experience of finite individuals. The first and second interpretations being obviously ruled out, we are left with the third. And the difficulties which arise, apart from those incident to subjectivism generally, belong on the one hand to the whole conception of an Including Consciousness, and on the other hand to the reconciliation of this conception with various expressions of Mr. Bradley's.

It scarcely seems profitable to pursue these difficulties at length. I suppose that Mr. Bradley adopted this impersonal subjectivism, perhaps on the suggestion of Hegel, in order to melt down more easily every element of existence into the Absolute: if my pen is nothing but a piece of sentience, it goes into the Absolute with less resistance than if I attributed to it independent objectivity. Now it would be easy to show how

difficult a view this is to work out consistently ; but I doubt in general the fairness of forcing back upon a writer difficulties which are merely incidental to his scheme and do not seem to have had his direct consideration. I would only point out that the conception of an Including Consciousness has no warrant from the facts of experience, except possibly from hypnotism and spiritualism. And these can hardly have been in Mr. Bradley's mind ; for he is wont to speak of the phenomena usually called 'psychic' with considerable disdain (cf. *A.R.* p. 343). Another difficulty is that the Absolute stands above the distinction of subject from object, and indeed above all distinctions. Thus the acceptance of the Including Consciousness would involve the theory of a distinctionless consciousness distinguishing itself into finite consciousnesses and realising itself indistinguishably through their distinctions. Till Mr. Bradley has found occasion to elucidate these matters, further critical subtlety seems wasted on them. Sufficient scope for ingenuity exists indeed in harmonising what Mr. Bradley has actually written. How, for example, are we to bring together the dictum "Reality is sentient experience" with the dictum that "no element of Reality falls outside the experience of finite centres." What about the further side of the moon, and the earth before life appeared upon it? For such cases Mr. Bradley really seems to need the hypothesis of angels or demons.

§ 42. And now I retire for good and all from the

most interesting and stimulating task of criticising Mr. Bradley's philosophy. There are three points of view from which his work may be considered : as developing Hegelian principles, as an original contribution to philosophy, and as literature. It will be gathered from the preceding pages that in the two former aspects I think he is rather at cross-purposes with himself. Nature, I believe, meant Mr. Bradley for an original mystic, one who would have brought within our ken a trans-phenomenal reality different from Spinoza's, or Schelling's, or Hegel's, or von Hartmann's, and different *toto cælo* from that of Christian devotion. His training and historical position in the development of English thought, on the other hand, have pressed him into the service of developing and popularising the ideas of German panlogism.

The literary affinities of Mr. Bradley's work would well repay study, if such were my province. From this point of view what is pre-eminently remarkable in *Appearance and Reality* is its appreciation of feeling generally, and its insistence on the value of strong emotional and sensational experience. In this he claims the sympathy of those who think that in the past feeling has not been treated fairly. All the philosophers from Plato to T. H. Green have antithesised flesh to spirit ; and all down the ages the literary men have been content to admit that the higher life is essentially spiritual. In our time, however, the flesh seems to have come by its own and something more. I am not, of course,

referring to any mere recrudescence of carnalism, which is too common and simple a phenomenon to deserve specially philosophic attention. I am thinking rather of a view of the flesh which puts it on a par with spirit, or, shall we say, a view which holds that the spiritual is reached most nearly through intensification of the sensuous. I cannot define more accurately a *Weltanschauung* which I cannot claim fully to understand; but something like this is said to underlie the poetry of Rossetti, Walt Whitman, and Mr. Swinburne, and has been traced in the work of Browning, Walter Pater, J. A. Symonds, and Mr. George Meredith,<sup>1</sup> not to mention continental writers. Unless I have taken Mr. Bradley quite amiss he is of kin with them; he also is a prophet of the flesh. He must be interpreted with relation to a movement which has given us much of what is finest in passion and feeblest in reasoning in the literature of the later nineteenth century.

<sup>1</sup> See J. Spens, "The Ethical Significance of Rossetti's Poetry," in *Int. Journ. of Ethics*, vol. xii. No. 2 (Jan. 1902).

## CHAPTER X

### PROFESSOR BOSANQUET

§ 1. PROFESSOR BERNARD BOSANQUET is a typical example of the Anglo-Hegelian of the present time, and all the more repays criticism because in his case construction bears an unusually large ratio to commentary and historical exposition. He takes up with modifications the phraseology and some of the leading principles of Hegelianism, and altogether has made it his aim to adapt that philosophy to contemporary tastes and needs. And yet, like most of the thinkers of his school, he is not a Hegelian in the strict sense, in so much as he does not commit himself to the fundamental dogmas of the Dialectic and the pantheistic Absolute.

Why these two dogmas have been dropped by Prof. Bosanquet we can conjecture from internal evidence only. The dialectic indeed is quite alien to modern ideas and finds a friend in Dr. McTaggart alone. Prof. Bosanquet's shyness of the pantheistic Absolute seems to be a more personal affair. It is certainly not connected with any leaning towards theism, but rather seems to be the reluctance of a cautious and anti-mystical intellect to



take a huge metaphysical assumption without grounds more solid than Hegel has to propose. A noticeable thing is that Prof. Bosanquet does not replace either the dialectic or the Absolute with anything of his own, and so leaves a hiatus which his readers have often considerable difficulty in filling up.<sup>1</sup>

§ 2. With this serious divergence the question arises why Prof. Bosanquet should have been attracted to Hegelianism. Apart from the reasons to be mentioned presently, there is the obvious and perfectly sufficient one that twenty years ago was the appropriate conjuncture for the diffusion of German ideas into our too insular thinking: any one earnest for philosophic progress had only to ally himself with the most notable tendency of the period. But we must certainly also consider that the philosophic position of this country bore some analogy to that of Germany in Hegel's time. There was in England the same pressure of the lower categories, and the same need to vindicate the independence and dignity of the spiritual life; the same need to repel encroachments of orthodoxy upon liberty of thought; the same need for a wise conservatism in moral and political life. The first motive may be taken for granted throughout; while the operation of the two latter is certainly not inconsiderable. In his *Logic* Prof. Bosanquet is careful to point out that "ecclesiastical interest" tends to

<sup>1</sup> This is particularly noticeable in regard to his views of Development and of Truth, *infra* §§ 5, 10.

exert itself in favour of theories that "represent judgment as an arbitrary and irrational activity" (i. p. 378); while the upshot of his *Philosophical Theory of the State* is that the state is a moral institution parallel to those organised habits of the individual which enable him to withstand the temporary and accidental solicitations of passion.

§ 3. Of Prof. Bosanquet's three main works, *Logic*, *History of Aesthetic*, and *Philosophical Theory of the State*, the first calls most for critical notice: the second is constructive only in a very subordinate degree; while the third in its later chapters, where the definite theory comes, follows Hegel very closely. The *Logic* is a very favourable specimen of Anglo-Hegelian work. Though owing much to Hegel in its general scheme, it is a tolerably free criticism, not only of knowledge, but of life. On an immense number of points, particularly in its treatment of inference, it is in advance of anything in our language. It would, I believe, have achieved more decisive success but for its passivist tendency and its inclination to intellectualism and subjectivism. Of absolutism, as we have seen already, Prof. Bosanquet keeps clear.

The Passive Fallacy which penetrates Prof. Bosanquet's whole view of things may be exemplified in its most general aspect by his view of Reality and the relation of knowledge to Reality. His inquiries do not call upon him to deal directly with ultimate metaphysical problems, but what he says and what he fails to say are enough to show that he

quite ignores the kinetic and dynamic character both of reality and of the human mind.

Prof. Bosanquet never has occasion to tell us explicitly what Reality is and what it is not; but, on his view, it is apparently non-material and certainly quite static. This is plain from what he says about time and change. He admits that every one in a certain sense and from a view-point short of ultimate must admit the reality of time. But he minimises that admission by treating time and time-determinations as more or less illusory, and as owing their importance mainly to personal defect of knowledge.

"The conception of cause," he says, "as an event in time anterior to effect gives way on analysis, and forces us back to the conception of the complete Ground; and the conception of incomplete Ground (*causa cognoscendi*) as distinct from Cause, expands into the same unity, which, as we saw, is at once the complete Cause and the real Ground, *i.e.* the relation of part to part within an actual and systematic totality" (i. 278).

History, therefore, he continues, has for its ideal "to disappear into systems of hypothetical judgment, in which complete ground should do duty for cause and effect, and the relation of time should disappear" (i. 276). So far as the time-relation will not disappear, Prof. Bosanquet would regard it as having only negative significance. "The order of succession, which has a largely negative aspect, disappears in the significance of a positive systematic connection" (i. 273); "for logical purposes change is only a case of difference or negation" (i. 140):

"change and motion have their logical value simply as embodiments of difference" (i. 143): "the Judgment tends to overcome change, and to view phenomena *sub specie aeternitatis*, and is in this respect at one with the Platonic 'forms'" (i. 41).

Upon the metaphysic of Knowledge Prof. Bosanquet is hardly more definite than upon Reality; but he quite dissociates it from any dynamic action of the world on the human spirit, or of the human spirit on the world. The systematic totality of the Real is somehow constructed and sustained by knowledge in general, and somehow reconstructed by knowledge in finite individual minds.

"The world, as *known to each of us*," says Prof. Bosanquet, "is constructed and sustained by his individual consciousness; and . . . every individual also frames for himself, and sustains by the action of his intelligence, the world in which he in particular lives and moves. Of course such a construction is to be taken as a re-construction, a construction by way of knowledge only" (i. 45).

Hence for Prof. Bosanquet, no less than for Hegel, logic and metaphysic are identical.

"I entertain no doubt," he says, "that in content logic is one with metaphysics, and differs, if at all, simply in mode of treatment—in tracing the evolution of knowledge in the light of its value and import, instead of attempting to summarise its value and import apart from the details of its evolution" (i. p. 247).

§ 4. This anti-dynamic Intellectualism, which prevents Prof. Bosanquet from appreciating the true character and function of thought is not really in harmony with his deepest conception of the task of the logician. It is evident from the opening

pages of the *Logik* that he wishes to treat his subject with something of that modern scientific spirit which insists on the organic co-ordination and evolution of human nature. His purpose, he says, is "the unprejudiced study of judgment and inference throughout the varied forms in which their evolution may be traced"; he regards the form of thought as "a living function"; he proposes to undertake "the genetic analysis of a systematic development" (i. p. 1 *sq.*). These are admirable phrases; better could not be found to stand in the forefront of a logical treatise: my complaint is that Prof. Bosanquet has a static prejudice which prevents him from acting up to them. Take first the description of thought as a "living function." What is a living function? Surely it can be nothing else than the function fulfilled by one element of our nature as a factor in that system of functions which constitutes our life. If the phrase be taken in its full significance it puts thought into its right place at once: it means that thought is implicated with the other elements of human nature and is influenced throughout by that implication. But there is no effective recognition of this in Prof. Bosanquet's work: he says nothing of the connection of thought with volition or with sensation. He appears to proceed on the panlogist assumption that thought is the whole man, or at any rate all of him that counts for logic.

§ 5. Again, consider those other phrases of Prof. Bosanquet's, "evolution," "genetic analysis,"

"systematic development": here again we have suggested a standpoint thoroughly in accordance with modern scientific ideas—a standpoint which would treat the various forms of logical thinking as progressively successful attempts to understand the world. But this is not the standpoint which Prof. Bosanquet adopts in his actual treatment. It is true he begins with the simplest thought-forms and proceeds upwards to the more complex and adequate: but he does not proceed *genetically*. He does not show us one form *growing* out of the one before it as the fruit of the subject's progressively successful striving. He limits himself to classification, and ranges his judgment-forms side by side like dried specimens in a pre-Darwinian herbarium.

The scheme of Prof. Bosanquet's classification is borrowed from Hegel, a fact which makes his neglect of the genetic character of thought even more remarkable. For Hegel's logic is genetic after a fashion, and his classification is based upon the treatment of thought-forms as categories of reality, the poorer and more abstract of which develop into the richer by the immanent principle of dialectic movement. Prof. Bosanquet, very properly, will have nothing to say to dialectic development. But this makes it all the more imperative that he should recognise development in some better and truer sense.

§ 6. This leads us on to a truly fatal flaw in Prof. Bosanquet's *Logic*, his omission of purpose. I believe that a sound theory of knowledge would be



based on the principle that thought, as implicated with action, is purposive through and through. Here again it appears that Prof. Bosanquet's deepest convictions would have led him in the right direction: so, at least, one gathers from his repeated insistence on individuality. "Truth," he remarks, "is individual, and no general principle, no abstract reflection, can be adequate to the content of what is individual" (i. 3). And, again, he says, "The main function of judgment would then be identified with the exhibition of individual totalities at once in their absoluteness and in their relativity" (i. 152). And he goes beyond even the personal idealist when he affirms that "the individuality of the content dictates its own time, place, and measure of existence" (i. 241). All this about individuality is in the right direction, at any rate; but how does Prof. Bosanquet reconcile it with his neglect of purpose? Surely it is purpose alone that confers individuality upon logical content. Take, for example, this very sentence that I have just written. Assume, for the sake of argument, that it is perfectly apt in furthering the purpose I have in view, *i.e.* the establishment of a certain view of the relation of purpose and logical individuality: in that case it is perfectly individual; as read in this context it could not be mistaken for any other sentence that ever was written. But if, on the other hand, it is quite irrelevant to the context, its individuality sinks to a minimum.

The same matter may be illustrated from another



side by considering the kindred subject of cogency. I do not remember that Prof. Bosanquet treats explicitly of cogency, either to explain in what it consists, or to distinguish one degree of cogency from another: but the whole tone of his work is opposed to the notion that cogency is derived primarily either from logical form (as the old-fashioned logicians thought), or from abstract relations of measurement and number (as the mechanical logicians). Whence then does it come? Prof. Bosanquet seems to be always near, but never quite on to, the truth that individuality and cogency are to be found primarily in the system of human purpose and life.

§ 7. The anti-sensational side of Prof. Bosanquet's intellectualism is seen in his treatment of perception. In this matter, as in others, I seem to observe a worse and a better tendency in him, the former due to Hegel, the latter to sympathy with modern science. Unluckily, it is the former that gets its way.

In his systematic account of the perceptive judgment he holds that in its simplest form it presents us with a "qualitative content" which "is very nearly simple." This reminds us of Hegel's doctrine that "sensuous certainty" gives nothing more than bare "Seyn," the utterly abstract category which makes the beginning of thought's development. The forms that succeed, according to Prof. Bosanquet, get further and further away from the simplest initial form till they culminate in the true generic judgment. Now the defect of this account is that

it treats sensuous experience merely as a starting-point to be left behind. There is no recognition of its function as an element in constituting the more advanced and generalised forms of judgment. Hence the difficulty which Mr. Hobhouse expresses as follows :

"I am quite at one with Mr. Bosanquet in thinking that the work of thought is to form the real world into a connected system. But I suggest that if we are to have a fabric we must have the thread to weave, and the tools to weave with. On my view, the thread is the world of sense, and the tools the activity of thought ; but what Mr. Bosanquet's thread is I cannot make out" (*Theory of Knowledge*, p. 413).

Without committing myself entirely to Mr. Hobhouse's metaphor of thread and tools, I must say I feel a similar inability to understand Prof. Bosanquet's position. I understand Hegel's position : he ignores the sensuous element in knowledge altogether, except so far as he refers to it as a sort of thinking. But Prof. Bosanquet declares the sensuous element to have capital importance, and yet finds for it no effective place in his exposition of the higher forms of judgment.

The better tendency of which I spoke consists in taking just this view of sense-perception as the data or material of knowledge. This tendency in Prof. Bosanquet I gather from his repeated assertion that in perception we touch reality.

"It was well done," he says criticising Mr. Bradley, "to invest perception with the pre-eminent importance of being the one point in which we have direct contact with reality, and to give this contact with reality the decisive

position in the activity of judgment" (*Knowledge and Reality*, p. 17; cf. *Logic*, i. pp. 3, 77).

I know that he also rebukes Mr. Bradley for making too much of sensuous experience; but this almost looks like an attempt to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. So much, at least, is plain, that Prof. Bosanquet wishes to give sensuous experience a position in logic very different from that which Hegel gave it. But, if he had carried out his wish, if he had really given it "the decisive position in the activity of judgment," his logical doctrine would have been different from what it actually is, and would not have exposed itself to such strictures as that quoted from Mr. Hobhouse.

§ 8. There is a very strong tinge of Subjectivism in Prof. Bosanquet's work which he hardly seems to realise to the full, but which, just for that reason, gives rise to manifold difficulties and obscurities. The difficulties seem to me incapable of systematic reconciliation: but I think we can understand them on the view that Prof. Bosanquet started from the Hegelian impersonal subjectivism, found it impossible to maintain in its entirety, and came round into something like the individual subjectivism of traditional English thought.

The tone of the *Logic* is strongly subjectivist in the Hegelian sense; and yet, as I have already remarked, it never commits itself to the Absolute. In the introduction to the *Logic* Prof. Bosanquet raises the question *what* thought it is

that he is studying, but holds himself entitled to put it by.

"The process," he says, "which logic investigates is the single process and individual self-determination of the whole which is the truth or reality. It is natural to ask 'Where and what is this self-determination? where does it begin? where does it end? Is it in the individual mind or in the history of the race, or in an arbitrary combination of the two?' I cannot attach much importance to this question, which might be asked with equal justice, as it appears to me, of every science. A science deals with its object-matter wherever it finds it. The self-determination of the knowing intelligence as the real world takes place wherever there is knowledge and in so far as there is knowledge" (i. pp. 6, *sq.*).

In a later passage he remarks that, though to assume that reality is "simply relative to the individual mind" would be ridiculous, yet the caution which a modern writer must exercise is such that "he hardly dares to allude to Mind as such or in itself." Hence, "as a working conception in Logic we are forced to adopt some such idea as that of a normal intelligence operative in all human minds, but subject to the accidental limitations of each" (i. pp. 247 *sq.*). This is obviously a compromise, and has the usual weakness of compromises in philosophy. Either the "normal intelligence" is only a class-conception, and then the assumption of "individual self-determination" implies the standpoint of individual subjectivism; or else it has a real existence apart from human individuals, and then we are committed to something like the Hegelian Absolute.

§ 9. More solipsistic in tone is another passage of his *Logic* (i. 45). The doctrine there propounded is set out with much force in a later work (*Essentials of Logic*, p. 14).

"For the purposes of *Logic*," he there says, "we must turn our usual ideas upside down. We must try to imagine something of this kind. We have all seen a circular panorama. Each one of us, we must think, is shut up alone inside such a panorama, which is movable and flexible, and follows him wherever he goes. The things and persons depicted in it move and act upon one another; but all this is in the panorama, and not beyond it. The individual cannot get outside this encircling scenery, and no one else can get inside it. Apart from it, prior to it, we have no self; it is indeed the stuff of which oneself is made. Is every one's panorama exactly the same? No, they are not exactly the same. They are formed round different centres, each person differing from all the others by individual qualities, and by his position towards the points and processes which determine his picture. For—and here is the remarkable point—every one of us has painted by himself the picture within which he is shut up, and he is perpetually painting and re-painting it, not by copying from some original, but by arranging and completing confused images and tints that are always appearing magically on his canvas. Now this magical panorama, from which the individual cannot escape, and the laws of which are the laws of his experience, is simply his own mind regarded as a content or a world. His own body and mind, regarded as things, are within the panorama, just as other people's bodies and minds are."

Shortly afterwards Prof. Bosanquet raises the question how it happens "that our separate worlds, the panoramas which we construct, do not contradict each other," and says "the answer is, that

they *correspond*" (p. 17). But he does not tell us about any enveloping system which makes them correspond, and therefore does nothing to qualify the solipsism of his panorama metaphor with its *magical* succession of changes.

§ 10. But notwithstanding this very striking utterance, Prof. Bosanquet's subjectivism rather inclines to the Hegelian type so far as its consequences go. These may be shown by considering, for instance, his view of Truth. In the common-sense view, truth is regarded as correspondence between individual thought and objective reality. But Hegel's impersonal subjectivism precludes recognition of individual thought: he therefore applies the term truth to express the relation of a higher category to a lower; the higher category is the 'truth' of one below, because it includes and explains it. Absolute truth can be predicated of the universe alone as Absolute Spirit, which is the perfect realisation of all the other categories. Prof. Bosanquet's view of truth is something like this, but far less definite. He raises the question how logic explains "that relation in which truth appears to consist, between the human intelligence on the one hand and fact or reality on the other," and says:

"If the object-matter of reality lay genuinely outside the system of thought, not only our analysis, but thought itself, would be unable to lay hold of reality. For Logic, at all events, it is a postulate that 'the truth is the whole.' The forms of thought have the relation which is their truth in their power to constitute a totality; which power, as referred to the individual mind, is its power to under-



stand a totality. The work of intellectually constituting that totality which we call the real world is the work of knowledge. . . . The truth, the fact, the reality, may be considered, in relation to the human intelligence, as the content of a single persistent and all-embracing judgment, by which every individual intelligence affirms the ideas that form its knowledge to be true of the world which is brought home to it as real by sense-perception" (i. pp. 2 sq.).

Of this very difficult definition we can at least say positively that it is irreconcilable with what the plain man means by truth: it appears to be the Hegelian view modified to some extent in the direction of individualism. To reach it Prof. Bosanquet seems to have started from the idealist position that if thought were separate from its object it could never lay hold upon it; to have accepted the Hegelian position that the truth, the whole truth, and the only truth is the thought-totality of the Absolute; to have shrunk subsequently from asserting the existence of a super-human Thought, and finally to have tried to reconcile the Hegelian position that "the truth is the whole" with his own individualistic and anti-mystical disbelief in any spirits but those of men.

§ 11. The other point in which Prof. Bosanquet's subjectivism is most apparent is the doctrine of the self-determination of thought. Though Prof. Bosanquet never gives a set exposition of this as he does of truth, it figures early in his work (i. 6) and is fundamentally implied in his whole treatment. The slightest consideration will show how incompatible it is with adequate recognition of the



individual. No one who takes any account of facts would hold that the thought of any individual is a self-determined or self-developing affair. Nor is the argument much different if we understand 'thought' as the thought of the race, so long as we pay the least regard to the actual history of civilisation. In fact such a doctrine is compatible with nothing but the Hegelian position which treats the facts of personal history as accidental and illusory, except so far as they can be regarded as exemplifying the process of the Absolute Subject. Here, more than anywhere else, Prof. Bosanquet reveals the true filiation of his logical theory.

§ 12. Prof. Bosanquet's *Logic* forms, I believe, the high-water mark of Anglo-Hegelianism, which in its later developments has turned more and more to commentary and criticism. It is not probable that so much acuteness and cultured experience will be devoted again to a constructive formulation of these principles. The higher, however, our opinion of Prof. Bosanquet's capacity, the less hopeful we shall feel of the possibility of adapting Hegel to modern requirements: intellectualism, absolutism, subjectivism, and the passive fallacy in general are fundamental to the structure of Hegelianism.

There are two ways of modernising Hegel, of which Prof. Bosanquet has chosen the more difficult and more aspiring. One is to keep as much of the essentials of Hegel as possible, and to attempt a constructive reinterpretation of mental and moral science in accordance therewith. This is what we

find in Prof. Bosanquet's works. The other way is to sublimate Hegelianism into a doctrine of edification; to draw from it such lessons as that all antitheses are reconcilable, that the good, the true, and the beautiful are one, that sermons can be found in logic and good in everything, and that Hegel is the truth of all his predecessors. Such philosophising has a considerable value for culture, inasmuch as it gives breadth and serenity to one's outlook upon thought and life. But what is valuable in education may be useless in science. The complaint of the friends of progress against the all-reconciling form of Anglo-Hegelianism is that they find it a hindrance to positive philosophical construction.

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